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Making sense of the native Caribbean

Critique of recent attempts to make sense of the history and anthropology of the native Caribbean. These works are based on the writings of Columbus and his companions and assume that there were 2 tribes: the Arawaks and Caribs. Author argues however that much work is needed to untangle the complex imbrication of native Caribbean and European colonial history.

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MAKING SENSE OF THE NATIVE CARIBBEAN

The quincentenary of the discovery by Caribbean islanders of a Genoese sailor in the service of Spain who thought he was off the coast of China has served to refocus attention on a part of the world whose native history has been little studied. Christopher Columbus eventually made some sense of the Caribbean, at least to his own satisfaction: one of his most lasting, if least recognized, achievements was to divide the native population of the Caribbean into two quite separate peoples, a division that has marked perceptions of the area now for five hundred years. This essay focuses on some recent attempts to make sense of the history and anthropology of the native Caribbean, and argues that much work is yet needed to untangle their complex imbrication with European colonial history.¹

THE NOVEL

An outline of the pre-Columbian history of the Caribbean occupies the first chapter of James Michener's block-busting 672-page historical novel, *Caribbean*, published in 1989, a useful source of popular conceptions about the native populations of the area. Michener's story begins in 1310 – a seemingly arbitrary date – on an island “which would later be named Dominica” (p. 5). The native name of the island was Waitukubuli, but this cannot be used because of its association with the Caribs who are about to overrun the island; so we are moved seamlessly from the absence of a name to the name given by the Spaniards. Three characters feature in this chapter, an Arawak

couple, Bakámu and Tiwánee, and the Carib leader Karúku. Bakámu has traveled to the islands immediately north and south of Dominica, both of which the novel again refers to by their future names, Guadeloupe and Martinique, and both of which Bakámu discovered, somewhat surprisingly, to be uninhabited.

In *Caribbean* the differences between the Arawaks and the Caribs are marked:

The Arawaks on this and other islands were one of the most peaceful peoples in the world: they had no word for war, for none was needed, and they reared their children in abounding love ... They lived in harmony with their small universe, reveling in the abundance and beauty of the island and accepting the hurricanes when they roared in to remind them that nature was omnipotent, not man. (p. 9)

The Caribs are taller and darker-skinned: "The heritage of the Caribs was brutality, warfare and little else ... They gloried in war and organized their society solely for its conduct. A fierce, terrible people, they were cannibals who fought any strangers, not only to subdue them but also to eat them" (p. 10). As one might perhaps expect of cannibals their eating habits are "totally primitive ... grabbing with dirty fingers scraps of meat from the common platter," while the Arawaks have introduced unspecified "refinements" in table manners. Carib canoes are heavier and less well-designed than Arawak canoes, and even their personal adornment is "of a warlike nature" (p. 11). The underlying template here is the distinction between the "military Spartans" and the "cultured Athenians" (p. 11); and the best that can be said about the Caribs is that, like the Spartans, they were "very good at what they chose to do" (p. 11). Karúku, the Carib leader, is described as having "a keen sense of tactics and strategy taught him by his father and grandfather, who had also been awesome warriors" (p. 10). Karúku is a military strategist who "drills his cadres" (p. 18).

The first chapter of *Caribbean* is called "A Hedge of Croton." Bakámu and Tiwánee are on one level an ordinary Arawak couple, but the plot of land on which their round hut stands is also easily determined because it "was outlined by a remarkable hedge which glowed when sunlight reflected from it" (p. 6). Tiwánee is largely described through her relationship with this hedge: "A hedge of croton was a perpetual bewilderment and joy, because the individual plants were a rowdy lot; they grew in wild profusion, obedient to none of the sensible laws that governed ordinary plants" (p. 6). Tiwánee trims her hedge regularly and with great determination, only to find that some of the plants shoot up out of all proportion, so much so "that she had to eliminate them, for they ruined her hedge" (p. 6). This unlikely activity seems to serve two functions. It marks out this couple as proto-

bourgeois, with their own defined sense of space: these Arawaks may live in a communist utopia, but they have amongst them, as their outstanding family unit, a couple who clearly have premonitions of the joys of private property.

Second, the hedge symbolizes freedom and “the joyousness of living” (p. 17):

One evening as Tiwánee sat with her husband in the sunset glow, surveying her lovely but unruly croton hedge, she told Bakámu: “This is the plant closest to people. It can be anything, tall or short, this color or that, bright or dark. You can’t make it obey, for it lives by its own rules, but if you let it have its own way, it can be glorious.” (p. 6)

This is the perfect image of Michener’s liberalism: Tiwánee provides some shape and trims off the excesses, playing the role of an enabling government; the various croton plants “live by their own rules” – at least until trimmed – but provide a glorious and – the crucial point – multi-colored display. The magic properties of the hedge are best suggested when it is described as providing shelter for Tiwánee during a hurricane (p. 8). All this is to be lost when the Caribs arrive.

Another major difference between the Arawaks and the Caribs is that the Arawaks are settled – the story of their arrival on Dominica is known only from legend; while the Caribs are described as “the terrors in any area into which they wandered” (p. 11). Population movement is motivated, it seems, by some crude will to power: Karúku had left the Orinoco “primarily to find a new area which he could dominate” (p. 10). Domination means eating the men they captured in battle, castrating the young boys to fatten them like capons for later feasts, and taking the most beautiful and healthy young women in order to enhance the vitality of their own group. One might have thought that this procedure, “practiced for hundred of years,” (p. 10) would have weakened the quotient of “Caribness” in the tribe of marauders, but this seems not to be an issue. They are indeed “a hybrid group of people, constantly reinforced by fresh blood,” but they profit from “the brutal strength that such hybridism often produces” (p. 11).

The Caribs want to exterminate the Arawaks. When Michener first uses the word “extermination,” it becomes the occasion for the book’s opening homily:

In many corners of the world at this time similar expeditions were being launched with similar goals, as groups of human beings, finding it impossible to coexist with those of a different color or religion, were concluding that extermination was the only solution. This conviction would continue to scar the world for the next eight hundred years and probably long after that. (p. 10)

Historians had not previously realized the importance of 1310. An argument could certainly be made that the era of modern European colonialism dates from the exploration of the Atlantic islands at roughly this time (see Fernández-Armesto 1987; Phillips 1988). But Michener's move here works on a higher, almost Toynbeesque level, suggesting that at this moment in different parts of the world, color and religion became issues of great moment, initiating expeditions of extermination:

This first battle would foreshadow many more that would scar the islands of this beautiful sea. In far western reaches, brutal warriors from central Mexico would crush the kindlier civilizations of the Maya. Exploring newcomers from Spain would decimate the peaceful Indians they found. Englishmen on far western Barbados would harry peaceful cargo ships and put all to the sword. And in island after island white owners would treat black slaves with a sickening barbarity. The assault of the warlike Caribs upon the peaceful Arawaks was merely the first in an unbroken chain of brutalities. (pp. 18-19)

The Caribs do not obviously fit into this pattern, and neither color or religion are mentioned as motives for their "wanderings" (though there is that mention of "darker-skinned"). But the motif has generally worked to deny the singularity of the European phenomenon. The Caribs were invaders, too; therefore the Spaniards, for all their brutality, were not guilty of introducing the exterminating impulse into the Caribbean: their behavior is even put into perspective by the awesome ferocity and inhumanity of the Caribs. *In this story the Caribs represent one supposed facet of human nature, an instinct for destruction which reappears later in Michener's novel when dealing with phenomena such as the Tontons Macoutes.*

The opposition between Arawak and Carib is marked by the treatment of women: "... the Arawaks had progressed to the point in civilization in which they respected, defended and adored women, while the Caribs treated them only as beasts of burden and breeders of new warriors" (p. 18); and the Arawaks' role as early paragons of the civilizational process is also crucially manifest in their enjoyment of the "ball game": "Mysteriously, these ball courts of the ancient Arawaks and their cousins the Maya to the west were similar in size to the fields that Europeans and Americans centuries later would choose for their soccer, football, rugby, and lacrosse fields, some eighty yards long by thirty wide" (p. 14). In this Caribbean ball game, the ball is struck only by the shoulder or hip, the captain of each team wearing a huge stone ring resting about his middle: "Since it weighed about twenty-four pounds, it gave extraordinary power when he struck the ball either with it directly or with his weighted hip" (p. 15). The rubber balls necessary for the game circulate somewhat mysteriously from the jungles of the mainland and are "cherished as national treasures" (p. 15). Although

the game clearly has ritual and even religious significance, the Arawak attitude towards it has developed in distinctly secular directions. Originally – “in the ancient days” (p. 16) – the captain of the losing team was decapitated and his blood scattered on the grass to ensure that it would remain green. However, “... after some centuries of such sacrifices the practical-minded Arawaks had reasoned among themselves: ‘Isn’t it rather ridiculous and lacking in profit to kill off each planting season the second-best player we have?’” (p. 16). Any society that can think in terms of profit is clearly developing along the right lines, especially if it leads its members to enjoy a ball game for its own sake, even one that they can excel at because nobody else plays it.

Karúku, the Carib chief, is placed beyond the boundary of proper human behavior by his lack of appreciation of the ball game: “Grown men playing a game! ... What kind of people are they, down there? No army? No weapons? No defenses? What do they think life is?” (p. 17). This is the book’s fundamental division: between those who think that life is for playing games, and those who think that it is for killing: “The impending struggle between these two contrasting groups was bound to be unequal, for in the short run brutality always wins; it takes longer for amity to prevail” (p. 18).

The Caribs are human enough to see that this island is indeed “a paradise,” (p. 11) and to want to settle there. It is left to Tiwánee, after her husband has been brutally killed, to glimpse “not only today’s horror but also the dreadful future of this hideous new society” (p. 20). The first two desecrations that Tiwánee witnesses are the destruction of the ball park – “This will be a training ground for warriors!”, Karúku cries (p. 20) – and the burning of the rubber ball – “Destroy that plaything of children!” (p. 20). But it is the third obscenity, to use Michener’s word, which was the worst, because it “foreshadowed what the new world would be like” (p. 20). This is a bold move. Historians may have imagined the “new world” as beginning in 1492, when the three worlds of Asia, Africa, and Europe encountered that fourth “quarter” previously unknown to them. For Michener the “new world” begins in 1310 when indigenous American brutality destroys indigenous American paradise, involving not just the killing of human beings but “the assassination of benevolent ideas” and “the destruction of these great good things” – such as the ball game and, final desecration, the hedge of croton which is cleared because assailants might hide there.

Paradoxically, Tiwánee finds hope in this last act of reduction. She realizes that Karúku – “the tyrant” (p. 20) – despite his martial ideology, is driven by fear: “He does not move like a hero, but like a coward,” unlike her dead husband, Bakámu, who “living freely, was afraid of nothing” (p. 20). This thought gives her the strength to break free of her Carib captors, dash up to Karúku, and plunge her dagger “deep into his heart” (p. 21).

My rhetoric will already have made it clear that I intend to submit this picture of the native Caribbean to critique. Michener is of course a decoy rather than the real target: the subject of the critique will be the recent swathe of scholarly books that have made sense of the Caribbean for a quincentenary readership. However, I use Michener's *Caribbean* to make a serious point: his picture of the native Caribbean is, on the surface, quite uncontroversial. It is entirely consonant with scholarly orthodoxy; indeed it is highly likely that Michener or his researchers have drawn on that orthodoxy. (At the beginning of *Caribbean* Michener states that there is "historical evidence for the life of the two tribes as portrayed," although none is provided in the "Further Reading" section at the back of the book.) Certainly there is nothing in the most highly regarded of the quincentenary publications that would contradict Michener's account. And, of course, the historical "evidence" for the life of the "two tribes" goes back to the writings of Columbus and his companions on the first two voyages to the Caribbean in 1492 and 1493.

FIRST CONTACT

On the evening of October 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus sat down to compose in writing his first impressions of the island in the Caribbean at which he had earlier that day made landfall, and in particular of its native inhabitants, with whom he had exchanged words and gestures. The paragraphs Columbus wrote that evening constitute the first European attempt to make sense of the native Caribbean.

In the *diario* as it has come down to us Columbus recalls his gifts of red caps and glass beads in which the native inhabitants took such pleasure. He describes the native bodies as well-formed and handsome; as naked; and as the color of the Canarians, neither black nor white. These natives are unacquainted with arms and cut themselves through ignorance on the edge of Spanish swords. Taken alongside their supposed innocence of economic values and their lack of clothes, the picture is quickly established of a set of simple and innocent pagans. From the repertoire of non-European figures available to fifteenth-century travelers, the native inhabitants of these Caribbean islands most resemble Hellenic primitives.

But this is no simple golden age world, for it carries the scars of a political process:

I saw some who had marks of wounds on their bodies and I made signs to them asking what they were; and they showed me how people from other islands nearby came there

and tried to take them, and how they defended themselves; and I believed and believe that they come here from tierra firme to take them captive. (Columbus 1989:67)

These words articulate the first version of the dualistic interpretation of the native Caribbean which has shown such remarkable longevity: these marks of wounds on native bodies "scar the islands of this beautiful sea," in Michener's resonant phrase.

As it happens this passage is also at the heart of what is arguably the single most important piece of quincentenary scholarship yet to appear, David Henige's *In Search of Columbus* (1991). This book (and two associated articles: Henige 1992 and Henige and Zamora 1989) provide an exemplary lesson in the careful reading of source material. Nothing has bedevilled the attempt to make sense of the early colonial history of the Caribbean more than the naive reading of colonial sources. Amongst these sources Columbus's so-called log or *diario* of his first voyage has always held a pre-eminent place – the first piece of European writing about America and, moreover, a text which seemed to have been produced "to the moment," immediate impressions unrevised. Problems with this text have always been recognized, of course, because of the loss of the original and contemporary dependence on the partial transcription and paraphrase by Bartolomé de las Casas, itself only re-discovered at the end of the eighteenth century; but the accuracy of Las Casas's transcription and paraphrase has rarely been doubted except by those like Henry Vignaud (1911) and Rómulo Carbia (1931) who argued that the whole thing was a forgery.

Henige's case is unremittingly negative. By means of a judicious combination of textual criticism and historiographic analysis he argues the likelihood – and he is careful not to claim more than this – that the text as we have it bears comparatively little relationship to the text Columbus wrote, and certainly less relationship than is usually taken for granted. Even the notion of "the text as we have it" is problematic, given that the only passably diplomatic transcriptions did not appear until 1976 and 1989. Henige makes his case through an accretion of detail which is impossible to reproduce here: my remarks will focus on this one passage describing the "marks of wounds."

A key element here is the role of Las Casas who, according to Henige, is to be considered the author of the *diario* as we now have it. Henige points out how little we know about the circumstances in which Las Casas transcribed Columbus's text. It has usually been presumed that Las Casas transcribed the *diario* as an adjunct to compiling his massive *Historia de las Indias*, but given that this was almost a lifetime project, the transcription could have been made at any time throughout Las Casas's long writing

career – though Henige favors 1552 as a likely date. We do not know for sure exactly what Las Casas was copying, except that it almost certainly was not the “original” text: Columbus may have made a fair copy himself, at least one copy was made on royal authority, probably by two scribes working alternately, and it may even have been a paraphrase of one of these transcriptions that Las Casas was working from.

One feature of Las Casas’s transcription is specially worthy of note as a key to the image of Las Casas which Henige is concerned to present: the passages that are offered as the words of the admiral himself. The matter is complicated. To begin with, it is not entirely clear how many passages fall into this category since Las Casas did not use quotation marks, though these are liberally supplied by most modern editors. Sometimes Las Casas reverts to the first person and sometimes he says a particular passage is “in the very words” of Columbus. However, in these instances comparison between the *diario* as we have it and the use that Las Casas made of his transcription of the *diario* in his *Historia de las Indias* reveals Las Casas’s interests and attitudes especially clearly, Henige argues. Henige quotes side by side Las Casas’s transcription of Columbus’s first account of the natives of Guanahani, a long passage which ends “All these are the words of the Admiral,” and the equivalent passage from the *Historia de las Indias*, which Las Casas introduces by saying “Who, in the book of his first navigation, which he wrote for the Catholic Monarchs, says in this way: ‘...,’” and which ends “All these are the words of the Admiral.” In the *Historia de las Indias* Las Casas is, presumably, transcribing his own transcription, so Henige is using the example as a way of throwing light on Las Casas’s practices. Henige (1992:204) sums up the quality of Las Casas’s self-transcription:

In this passage (which happens to be one of the longest of the direct quotations in the *Historia*) Las Casas omitted words, added words, changed the form of words, added phrases, changed singulars to plurals as well as the converse, and changed a masculine form to a feminine. Some of these changes (e.g., omitting the “no” and making “nariz” feminine) corrected apparent errors of Columbus. Others were mistakes by Las Casas, while yet others constituted discretionary – and pointless – editorial tampering. Yet in a sense none of this is really the point. By claiming to be *quoting* Columbus, Las Casas automatically undertook the obligation to do just that rather than silently to emend that which he found wanting.

But these emendations are all relatively minor when compared with the fifty-four words that Las Casas eliminated from the middle of this “quotation”:

Yo vide algunos que tenían señales de feridas en sus cuerpos, y les hize señas qué era aquello, y ellos me amostraron cómo allí venían gente de otras islas que estaban acerca y los querían tomar y se defendían. Y yo creí, y creo, que aquí vienen de tierra firme a

tomarlos por captivos. (Quoted by Henige 1992:203; see pp. 194-95 above for translation: Henige's own translation has minor differences.)

Strictly speaking, the argument about the quality of Las Casas's transcription should require no explanation in order to make Henige's point about the care with which we need to treat historical sources. However, Henige does have an overarching explanatory thesis, one which takes us into the heart of debates about the anthropology of the native Caribbean. Las Casas is introduced on the third page of *In Search of Columbus* as "noted historian and advocate of the Indians." The year 1552 is supported as likely for the transcription:

It remains only to point out that a later date – say 1552, when Las Casas was in full rhetorical flight over the plight of the Indians – would encourage a wider range of arguments concerning the partisan uses to which he may have felt obliged to put the *diario*, beginning with its very transcription. (Henige 1991:22)

The passage analyzed is the first in the *Historia de las Indias* in which Las Casas quoted Columbus, a passage which, Henige (1992:202) says, "symptomatically" refers to Columbus's first impressions of the islanders of Guanahani. And Las Casas's blindness in the Indian cause is offered as explanation for the missing fifty-four words:

The notion of Indians' enslaving other Indians was of course anathema to Las Casas, who was prepared to countenance only the thought that slave raiding in the Caribbean was an innovation of the Spanish. He may well have thought that he had no choice but to allow the passage to disappear from its new context. Perhaps he even convinced himself that Columbus had been in error, despite his unwonted reiteration ('creí y creo'). (Henige 1992:204)

Henige is extremely scrupulous in the use he makes of the evidence adduced. He offers no anachronistic condemnation of Las Casas's practices: his criticism is quite properly directed at modern editors who have failed to address the issues. Nonetheless, there is a sense in which – to put it as carefully as possible – his characterization of Las Casas needs to be complemented if the terms of the political argument about the state of the native Caribbean in 1492 are to be transcended (and "native Caribbean" tends in this argument to stand for America itself).

Although Henige's case needs no explanatory hypothesis, the one he offers introduces a whole level of interpretation which, in the context where it arises, can only remain as speculation – but speculation which inevitably colors the otherwise neutral tones of the case. One phrase can make the point: "partisan uses to which he [Las Casas] may have felt obliged to put

the *diario*." If this were to be offered as a substantial argument, there are points that could be made against it. For one thing, if 1552 is taken as the date of transcription, then one has to imagine Las Casas transcribing the fifty-four words from target text to copy before omitting them soon afterwards when he transcribed his transcription into the *Historia de las Indias*. Why did he not simply omit the words from his first transcription, or paraphrase them in such a way as to suggest that Columbus was probably mistaken? Why leave the kind of hostage to fortune which enables Henige to suggest partisan usage? Are we to posit some kind of editorial consciousness which operated at stage one, but which Las Casas did not feel obliged by when composing a work in his own name? Or are we to see him as incompetently partisan, not bothering sufficiently to cover the traces of his offence? Then there is the question of just who is doing this "slave-raiding" in the Caribbean. It may well be that what Columbus had in mind were visits by the soldiers of the Great Khan, whose mainland cities he presumed were not far distant from the islands where he made landfall. The words of the Indians or, given the unlikelihood of efficient communication, the very wounds on their bodies or, to be absolutely scrupulous about this, Columbus's belief that he saw wounds on the Indians' bodies, offer no incontrovertible evidence at all about the nature of native Caribbean politics. Of course, Las Casas may well have mistakenly believed that it did, and may have acted accordingly to remove the statement from his transcription of the transcription. The problem with "partisan uses to which he may have felt obliged to put the *diario*" is that these difficult matters of reading and interpretation are glossed over, leaving an image of Las Casas, if not as a deliberate forger, then as someone acting under intense ideological pressure: "he may well have thought that he had no choice."

To generalize the point: the problem with Henige's suggestion (as opposed to the rigorous argumentation which characterizes book and articles) is that Las Casas is the only person involved who is designated "partisan." It would not be difficult to make an argument that Henige's sketch of Las Casas is in its own way deeply partisan inasmuch as it presents a strong image of Las Casas as someone who altered evidence to suit his own concern about the plight of the Indians – whereas, as Henige himself (1991:11-30, 65-101) points out, Las Casas's practices as editor were by modern standards at least in line with, if not considerably in advance of, his contemporaries, and by no means as reprehensible as those of modern editors.

More important, though, for my purposes here – and I do have purposes, even if they stop short of partisanship – is that what Henige says (and does not say) about the fifty-four words allows those words to pass unchallenged as evidence about the nature of the native Caribbean. It is no longer exactly

clear whose words they are since Columbus has been removed as effective author of the *diario* (and therefore presumably cannot be considered as partisan) and Las Casas has partisanly omitted the words from his *Historia*. The words are left as unauthored and neutral discourse, yet marked after the event of their composition as significant by Las Casas's partisan decision to omit them from his transcription of the transcription: they seem – as is implied by the use of a word like “symptomatically” – to tell an awkward truth that needs partisan denial in the interests of a rhetorical campaign about “the plight of the Indians.”

In the context of trying to make sense of the native Caribbean the complement to Henige's argument must be a demonstration of other forms of partisanship, made visible through textual analysis of the accounts left by those close to Columbus who offered “descriptions” of the people they found in the Caribbean.

NATIVE INHABITANTS

Just whom then did Columbus encounter in the Caribbean in 1492? The best of quincentenary scholarship is in no doubt. This is Wim and Carla Phillips (1992:160): “We know the people he first encountered and described were Tainos, members of the widespread tribes of the Arawak language group that inhabited lands ranging from the Amazon through the Caribbean.”² And Irving Rouse, doyen of archaeologists of the Caribbean, calls his recent book, addressed to academics and “the interested public” (1992:xi): *The Tainos: Rise and Decline of the People Who Greeted Columbus*. These are representative of many apparently simple statements now being made about the people Columbus met on his first voyage. Yet “Taino” is by no means a universally accepted denomination; it was certainly not the name this “people” called themselves; and there is increasing uncertainty as to the boundaries and nature of the group being referred to.

To start with, Taino is a word of relatively recent currency within English and is still not in popular usage: Michener, it will be noted, uses the more common “Arawak,” as does Fred Olsen (1974:3): “The friendly natives he encountered there he called Indians. Today we know they were Arawaks.” The standard English histories of the region still use Arawak (Parry and Sherlock 1956; Greenwood and Hamber 1979; Honychurch 1979; Claypole and Robottom 1980), as do some of the most recent scholarly works in various disciplines (Lockhart and Schwartz 1983:69-73; Parry and Keith, 1984, vol. 2: passim; Watts 1987:51-77; Greenblatt 1991:52-87). “Taino” is probably more established, it might be noted, in the Spanish-speaking

Caribbean (García Valdez 1930; Pichardo Moya 1956; Cassá 1974; López Baralt 1976; Fernández Méndez 1979). The terminological question is worth pursuing, if only because it opens up for inspection the apparently seamless simplicity of supposed ethnographic "observation" and "reportage" in this region.

The islanders Columbus encountered on his first voyage did not have a self-designation or, if they did, Columbus did not note it: he simply called them "indios," a term that was apparently sufficient for Spanish colonial bureaucracy and for the historians who wrote the first accounts of the Caribbean encounter: the absence of a proper name perhaps seemed emblematic of the islanders' state of lack, whether that lack was interpreted in a positive or negative sense.

The naming process began with the great nineteenth-century U.S. attempts to map the native continent. Daniel Brinton (1871) used the term Island Arawak because of presumed affiliations of descent and language with the Arawaks of the mainland, and ever since Arawak (sometimes modified by Island) has been the most popular term to designate the native islanders of the north and north-west Caribbean. Taino (first suggested as an ethnic marker by Rafinesque in 1836) seems then to have developed either as an alternative to Island Arawak (Fewkes 1904; Lovén 1935); or to refer specifically to the culture of the Greater Antillean islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico (Fewkes 1922). In the influential *Handbook of South American Indians*, edited by J.H. Steward (1948), Irving Rouse used Arawak as the general category for the area, which he then divided into five, based on "the linguistic and cultural differences recorded in the historic sources." The Taino were "the majority of the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, and the eastern tip of Cuba." The people of Jamaica and central Cuba were referred to as Sub-Taino (1948a:521). Rouse later rejected the use of the unmodified term Arawak to refer to the native inhabitants of the islands (1974), and in his recent book (1992) he seems to use Taino in something like Lovén's sense, but now divides the region into Classic Taino (previously Taino), Western Taino (Sub-Taino), Lucayan Taino (Lucayan), and Ciguayan Taino (Ciguayan). An interesting new group also appears, called Eastern Taino. The Classic Taino are so called because they are the "most advanced culturally" (1992:7), a people who had "reached maturity" about 1200 AD (p. 169). On the fringes there are also "peripheral" groups (p. 5), in the west the Ciboney and in the east the Island-Carib, as Rouse calls them in distinction to the Carib "proper" of South America (p. 21).³ This is very much a Taino-centred view of the Caribbean, motivated by unstated assumptions about the nature of cultural development.

In the circumstances, the Phillipses' statement that the first people

Columbus encountered "were Tainos" seems at the very least an oversimplification which obscures the amount of intellectual effort expended by commentators to produce that designation as unproblematic. But the Philipps' sentence has further implications that need unpicking. "The people ... were Tainos": a singular group is posited. Again, Rouse's (1992:5) authoritative words seem to lend support: "The central group ... lacked an overall name in Columbus's time. Its members referred to themselves by the names of the localities in which they lived." Leaving aside both the telling verb "lack" (which here suggests a norm by which the islanders are judged inadequate), and the fact that Columbus's failure to report a name is not necessarily the same as the lack of a name, the crucial move in Rouse's sentence is the grammatical constitution of a "group" that his reported ethnographic evidence has failed to discover. "Its members": a plurality of localities is transformed into a singular people, despite the absence of any clear ethnic marker. However, Rouse does produce an ethnic marker of sorts, a negative self-identification which seems to justify the usage "Taino": "The group is called Taino, meaning 'good' or 'noble', because several of its members spoke that word to Columbus to indicate that they were not Island-Caribs" (1992:5; citing Alegría 1981). This seems to be the only basis for Rouse's use of Taino as an ethnic term (p. xi), and for his statement that the ethnic groups of Columbus's time "are defined by documentary evidence" (p. 108).⁴

In the literature of the first two voyages there are three occasions on which some version of the word *taino* appears. In the *diario* entry for December 23, 1492 Columbus recounts his struggle to come to terms with native words for parts of the social system in Hispaniola:

All of the Indians returned with the Christians to the village, which he affirms to be the largest and the best arranged with streets than any other of those passed through and found up to that time. The town, he says, is in the direction of the Punta Santa almost three leagues southeast, and since the canoes go fast with oars, they went ahead to let the cacique, as they call him there, know. Until then the Admiral had not been able to understand whether cacique meant king or governor. They also use another name for an important person, whom they call *nitayno*. He does not know if they say it for noble, or governor, or judge. Finally the cacique came to them and the whole town, more than two thousand persons, gathered in the plaza, which was very well swept. This king was very courteous to the people from the ships, and each of the common people brought them something to eat and drink. Afterward the king gave to each one some of the pieces of cotton cloth that the women wear, and parrots for the Admiral, and certain pieces of gold. (Columbus 1989:271)

Even a superficial reading would suggest that what Las Casas is here summarizing is Columbus's attempt to match native terminology with social divisions that make some sense to European eyes. He succeeds after a

fashion. By the end of the passage *cacique* has been assimilated to king (to whom information goes, who is courteous to strangers, and who gives gifts); there are common people (who need no name and who serve food and drink); and there is an intermediate level of important people called *nitay-nos* who seem to be the equivalent of European "nobles." There are no ethnic markers here. For this reason Carl Sauer (1966:37) rejected the use of Taino as "a term introduced in the present century and taken casually from the name for a single social class."

On the second voyage to the Caribbean, Columbus and his fleet made landfall in the Lesser Antilles at the islands of Marie Galante and Dominica before sailing north to Guadeloupe. This is the report of the ships' physician Dr. Diego Álvarez Chanca, in a letter written for the municipality of Seville:

On this first day that we landed there, many men and women walked along the shore next to the water looking at the fleet and marvelling at something so novel. And when a boat came to land to speak with them, saying to them *taino, taino*, which means "good", they waited as long as they [the sailors] did not leave the water, staying near it, so that when they wished they could escape. (Translated in Hulme & Whitehead 1992:33; Spanish in Gil & Varela 1984:159)

The repeated "they" is confusing and the "saying" hangs unattached, but translators seem to agree that the word *taino* is spoken here by Columbus's sailors, not by the islanders who greeted them with circumspection (Columbus 1988:134; Chanca 1984:78). The exchange clearly leaves considerable room for interpretation – and I will return to this encounter on Guadeloupe later in the essay. The sailors may after all simply have been mumbling the one word they knew in a native Caribbean language. Perhaps the most likely explanation, however, is that they were indicating to the "common people" on the shore that they were *taino* from another place and therefore due a certain deference: in other words the Spaniards were explaining as best they could how they fitted (or rather perceived themselves as fitting) into the local social system. If *taino* was being used here as an ethnic marker, then it was being used by the Spanish sailors to indicate that they were "not Island Carib." But since, as Chanca says, "we suspected that the islands were those of *Caribe*" (p. 32), claiming to be *taino* would not be a clever way of introducing oneself. If, on the other hand, the islands were not "those of *Caribe*," then the walkers on the shore were hardly going to be convinced by a positive claim to belong to the same ethnic group as themselves. In any case, if ethnicity is involved at all, then it can only be that the *Spaniards* were intending to describe themselves as "not Carib": the example gives no evidence at all of self-identification.

The third example of the use of *taino* comes from the Italian humanist

Peter Martyr D'Anghera's (1587:20) account of an incident later on the second voyage when Melchior Maldonado is exploring the coast of Hispaniola and comes upon what seems to be a fine harbor on the shores of a major estuary:

In the course of their explorations of this country the Spaniards perceived in the distance a large house, which they approached, persuaded that it was the retreat of Guacancarillo. They were met by a man with a wrinkled forehead and frowning brows, who was escorted by about a hundred warriors armed with bows and arrows, pointed lances and clubs. He advanced menacingly towards them. "Tainos," the natives cried, that is to say, good men and not cannibals [*id est, nobiles esse, non Canibales*]. In response to our amicable signs, they dropped their arms and modified their ferocious attitude. To each one was presented a hawk's bell, they became so friendly that they fearlessly went on board the ships, sliding down the steep banks of the river, and overwhelmed our compatriots with gifts. (English translation in D'Anghera 1912, 1:81; Spanish in Gil & Varela 1984:60)

Peter Martyr, of course, is not an eyewitness, and it is impossible to reconstruct in detail the discursive sequence that connects the original witness to this event to the narrative that survives here. Enough does survive, however, in the various narratives of the second voyage, to comprehend something of the complexity of the political process on Hispaniola in the weeks following the Spaniards' return. Guacanagari (here Guaccanarillo), the *cacique* who helped Columbus after the shipwreck of the *Santa María* and who probably thought that he would never see the Spaniards again, has – so the sources suggest – been behaving suspiciously in the course of his claims of innocence in the disappearance and presumed death of the men that Columbus had left behind on Hispaniola. Guacanagari's story is that the Spaniards were killed during a raid by the neighboring *cacique*, Caonabó; and Guacanagari supposedly carries a wound from this raid, implicit evidence of his brave but futile defense of the Spaniards left in his care. Melchior Maldonado was sent by Columbus to inspect Guacanagari's wound and reported that when the bandage was untied he had seen neither wound nor scar ("ni herida ni cicatriz alguna" [p. 58]), though the *cacique* had indeed been lying in bed *seemingly* ill, surrounded by the beds of his seven concubines. In Peter Martyr's report Maldonado is clearly unimpressed by the genuineness of Guacanagari's injury. Maldonado is supposed to have hidden his suspicions. However one might assume that his arrival on a neighboring part of the coast would be likely to cause some dismay: was this Spaniard a friend of Guacanagari? Did he know what Guacanagari's part (if any) was in the death of the Spaniards? Was he here on reprisal or to make friends? These questions, or questions like them, would have been relevant to the interchange that followed and that is reported, second- or third-hand, by Peter Martyr. The

native cry of *taino*, even if we assume it correctly recorded, was not an innocent and unmotivated self-identification, it was a tactical move within a desperate game. Judged by the actions which accompanied it, the islanders were trying to cover all options and were grateful when the dangerous strangers did not want to fight.

The word *taino*, spoken in this context, is open to many interpretations. The islanders accompanying the *cacique* may have presumed that they were safe if they claimed a relationship to him which would be established by that word. They may have been asserting some kind of class solidarity with the new arrivals. They may have heard reports that the visitors, for whatever reason, referred to themselves in that way, and so sought to "recognize" and welcome them with the use of the appropriate identifier. In the circumstances the important thing is that "and not cannibals" is recognized as a gloss, possibly Columbus's own, certainly belonging to the "official" interpretation of the second voyage to which both Chanca and Peter Martyr contributed. There is nothing in Martyr's sentences, any more than in the other two examples, on which *taino* can rest as an ethnic identifier.⁵

CANNIBALISM AND ITS REPORTERS

The Phillipses (1992:196) draw a sharp contrast between Columbus's hyperbolic accounts of the wonders of the Caribbean and the "firsthand, hard-headed testimony" of people like Diego Álvarez Chanca, the physician from Seville, and Michele de Cuneo, Columbus's friend from Savona. The letters of Chanca and Cuneo are offered as "valuable correctives" to Columbus's "overblown descriptions": "Unlike Columbus, they had no reason to embellish what they saw."

The Phillipses' account (1992:196-97) of the opening days of Columbus's second voyage through the islands of the Caribbean is taken entirely from Chanca:

Chanca's first description of a deserted village on the island named Santa María la Galante reported the discovery of human arm and leg bones in the houses, presumably the remains of a cannibal feast. Later, on Guadelupe, an island christened when the fleet arrived on November 4, Dr. Chanca reported the seizure of a number of Caribs and their captives, who fled to the Europeans for deliverance from the Caribs. The women captives were especially grateful to be rescued and secretly told the Europeans which of the islanders were Caribs and which were not. After this incident, Chanca and the other commentators began drawing a distinction between the Caribs, or cannibals, and the "*Indians*," who were not cannibals and feared the Caribs. From then on, some of the complexity of New World societies began to color their narratives.

Chanca was horrified by what he and his colleagues learned from the women they

rescued. He described the Caribs as “*bestial*” and indicted their treatment of conquered peoples ... Chanca’s matter-of-fact reporting of these horrors leaves little doubt of their authenticity.

The authors add a note referring to two other accounts of cannibalism described by participants on the second voyage, and continue (p. 295, n.21):

The existence of cannibalism in pre-1492 America is accepted by many historians and social scientists. Some anthropologists and literary critics suggest that it existed only in the minds of the Europeans ... To deny that cannibalism existed, one needs to assume that a wide range of European commentators simply made up the stories, an interpretation that defies reason, logic, and the available evidence.⁶

It might be noted how the Phillipses’ rhetoric works in this passage. The disciplinary division between “historians and social scientists” on the one hand and “anthropologists and literary critics” on the other (further inflected by *many* of the first group as opposed to *some* of the second) repeats the contrast between the “hardheaded” testimony of Chanca and Cuneo and the “overblown” descriptions of Columbus. Historians and social scientists, like Chanca and Cuneo, are not interested in “embellishments”: they will just stick to the evidence made available through “matter-of-fact reporting.” Reason and logic demand this approach. And once reason and logic have been followed, Dr. Chanca is seen as having provided incontrovertible evidence of cannibalism in the Caribbean islands.

We are fortunate enough to have a detailed study of what is known about Dr. Chanca and his letter, written by Consuelo Varela (1985), one of the leading Spanish experts on Columbian and related documentation. All in all, the Phillipses would seem to gain substantial support for their position from Varela’s article. For a start Chanca emerges well from her formidably detailed comparison of the various surviving accounts of the second voyage. Nothing Chanca says is contradicted by the other reports, but neither is his account weighed down by the comparisons that mark those by Peter Martyr and Guillermo Coma, who are always referring everything to Virgil or Ovid – embellishing their texts with unnecessary humanism; nor indeed was Dr. Chanca’s letter even written with a view to publication or wide dissemination. For Varela, this clearly gives the text a special status. Chanca’s credibility is absolute, she says (p. 29): his letter genuinely presents “*primeras impresiones*” [first impressions] (p. 21). She calls it a “*relación ... sin propósito de historiar acontecimientos*” [an account which does not aim to put events into a history] (p. 29) with the clear implication that Chanca’s lack of interest in giving any pattern or interpretation to the events he relates and the impressions he gains, makes him an especially reliable witness. He had

no axe to grind. He presents, Varela says, "un texto fresco y limpio," a fresh and clean text.

However, there is also evidence in Varela's article less conducive to the Phillipses' argument. She makes the point that the second voyage is known to us exclusively through sources that are basically well-disposed towards Columbus, the only possible exception being the Savonese Michele de Cuneo, who was Columbus's friend but who had a very individualistic take on what he saw. Chanca personifies this general warmth towards the admiral, even suggesting that Columbus had picked the perfect spot on which to found the city of Isabella – and not even his best friends thought that Columbus had a good eye when it came to choosing spots for founding cities. This attitude may not, Varela suggests, be unconnected with the fact that Chanca knew that the ship carrying his letter to Spain also carried a letter from Columbus to the King and Queen requesting a substantial increase in Chanca's salary (which was eventually granted). In other words, the existence of Columbus's letter begins to undermine that difference between Columbus and Chanca which the Phillipses are concerned to erect as a way of validating Chanca's testimony. It suggests a relationship that is in fact borne out by textual evidence.

Dr. Chanca's testimony may be "unembellished," but it is not quite as straightforward as the Phillipses make out. Chanca does not describe a village on Marie-Galante at all, let alone the discovery there of human arm and leg bones. They presumably refer to the incident that took place on Guadeloupe:

When we came near, the admiral ordered a light caravel to coast along looking for a harbour. It went ahead and having reached land, sighted some houses. The captain went ashore in the boat and reached the houses, in which he found their inhabitants. As soon as they saw them [our men] they took to flight, and he entered the houses and found the things that they had, for they had taken nothing away, and from there he took two parrots, very large and very different from all those seen before. He found much cotton, spun and ready for spinning, and articles of food; and he brought away a little of everything; especially he brought away four or five bones of the arms and legs of men. When we saw this, we suspected that the islands were those islands of *Caribe*, which are inhabited by people who eat human flesh. For the admiral, in accordance with the indications as to the situation of those islands which the indians of the islands which they had previously discovered had given to him on the former voyage, had directed his course to discover them, because they were nearer to Spain and also because from there lay the direct route by which to come to Española, where he had left people before. To these islands, by the goodness of God and by the good judgment of the Admiral, we came as directly as if we had been sailing on a known and well-followed route. (Translated in Hulme & Whitehead 1992:32; Spanish in Gil & Varela 1984:158)

Columbus's navigational skills (perhaps aided by the returning Lucayans)

allowed him to take up his exploration of the Caribbean islands almost exactly where he had left off earlier in 1493. This is an important point, because it contextualizes Chanca's position as supposed hardheaded eyewitness. The plan, to which Chanca is clearly privy, is to begin the second exploration at the point where the first had had to be broken off, leaving unvisited the islands supposedly inhabited by "caribes" and supposedly the site of major supplies of gold (cf. Hulme 1986:39-43). The working assumption already is that the second expedition has arrived at these islands: the sight of four or five human bones is enough to confirm the suspicion "that the islands were those islands of *Caribe*, which are inhabited by people who eat human flesh." However, the end of the Phillipses' first sentence is distinctly ambiguous – and shows how unstraightforward "hardheaded" reporting can be. To begin with, what Chanca offers is not a description at all: he was not a member of the landing-party. He reports second-hand what was told to him, probably by the captain of the caravel. "Presumably the remains of a cannibal feast" may be the Phillipses' gloss on Chanca's reportage or it may be intended to correspond to Chanca's words "we suspected that ..." In neither case, however, do the bones provide evidence which in some unproblematic way speaks for itself: as Washington Irving ([1828]1981:192) pointed out, nearly 170 years ago, when bones were found in native dwellings on Hispaniola they were regarded as relics of the deceased, preserved through reverence, but when found amongst the presumed Caribs they were looked upon with horror as proof of cannibalism. In any case, Chanca had not been on the first voyage, so he himself had no expectations, let alone any knowledge. "We suspected that ..." can only refer to a collective view promulgated principally by Columbus himself as source of authority and as main conduit of information and opinion between first voyage and second. (Again the role of the native captives returning to the Caribbean is difficult to assess, though possibly quite important.) The division that the Phillipses want to erect between Columbus and Chanca falls at the first hurdle: in writing this sentence Chanca places himself grammatically, through his use of the first-person plural, within the "official version" propounded by Columbus. In no way can he be seen as an "independent" or "fresh" witness.

Chanca's next supposed "report," according to the Phillipses, is of "the seizure of a number of Caribs and their captives, who fled to the Europeans for deliverance from the Caribs. The women captives were especially grateful to be rescued and secretly told the Europeans which of the islanders were Caribs and which were not." These are Chanca's words:

[O]n the seashore there were some small settlements, and as soon as they saw the sails, they all ran away. Having gone two leagues, we found a harbour and that very late. That

night the admiral decided that at daybreak some should go to speak with them and to find out what people they were, despite the suspicion felt and [the fact that] those who had already been seen running away were naked people like the others whom the admiral had already seen on the earlier voyage.

That morning certain captains set out; some returned at the hour of eating and brought a boy of about 14, as was afterwards learned, and he said that he was one of those whom these people held captive. The others divided up. Some took a small boy, whom a man was leading by the hand and deserted in order to flee. They then sent him with some of them; others remained and of these some took certain women, natives of the island, and other women who were amongst the prisoners, who came willingly. (Translated in Hulme & Whitehead 1992:32; Spanish in Gil & Varela 1984:158-59)

He reports the speaking of the word *taino* (quoted earlier) and the circum-spection of the walkers on the shore:

The result was that none of the men could be taken by force nor willingly, except two who felt confident and who were afterwards taken by force. More than twenty women of the captives were taken, and other native women of the island came of their own accord and were captured and taken by force. Some boys, captives, came to us, fleeing from the natives of the island who held them captive.

We were in this harbour eight days, because of the loss of the above-mentioned captain, and we often went on land, going about their dwellings and villages which were on the coast, finding an infinite number of men's bones and skulls hung up about the houses like vessels to hold things. Not many men appeared here, the reason being, according to what the women told us, that ten canoes had gone with people to raid other islands. These people seemed to us more polished than those who live in the other islands which we have seen, although they all have dwellings of straw, but these have them much better made and better provided with supplies, and there seems to be in them more industry, both male and female. They had much cotton, spun and ready for spinning, and many cotton cloths, so well made that they lose nothing by comparison with those of our own country.

We asked the women who were captive on this island what these people were; they replied that they were *caribes*. After they understood that we hated those people for their evil custom of eating the flesh of men, they rejoiced greatly, and if after that they brought any woman or man of the *caribes*, they said secretly that they were *caribes*, for even here where all were in our power they went in fear of them, like subjugated people; and so we found out which of the women were *caribes* and which not, for the *caribe* women wear two rings made of cotton on each leg, one near the knee and the other near the ankle, so that the calves are made large and the places mentioned very constricted, and it seems to me that they regard this as something graceful; so, by this difference we know the ones from the others. (Translated in Hulme & Whitehead 1992:33; Spanish in Gil & Varela 1984:158)

The lengthy quotation is necessary to demonstrate just how complex this "hardheaded" firsthand testimony really is.

The first impression offered is of "naked people like the others whom the admiral had already seen on the earlier voyage," a supremely clear example of a statement that is only superficially that of an "eyewitness" since the

comparison it makes is completely dependent on the information supplied by the admiral. If this comparison is offered as supporting evidence for the suspicion that these are the islands of *Caribe* (which is what the context suggests, although the words themselves are not entirely clear), then the reference is to the "naked people" encountered towards the end of Columbus's first voyage, whom he was convinced were the "Caribs" he had heard about, on account of their less than welcoming manner.⁷ And, whereas the "docile" natives of Guanahani had approached the strangers without fear, these supposedly "fearless" inhabitants run away, an action rather unconvincingly "explained" by Peter Martyr:

... when they saw our men, these savages, whether because they were afraid or because they were conscious of their crimes, looked at one another, making a low murmur, and then, suddenly forming into a wedge-shaped group, they fled swiftly, like a flock of birds, into the shady valleys. (D'Anghera 1587:12; English in D'Anghera 1912, I:73; Spanish in Gil & Varela 1984:53)

Of the people the Spaniards actually succeed in making contact with, some are boys, who flee from the natives holding them captive, some are native women, some of whom are captured, and some are women prisoners, some of whom "came willingly" – and are "taken." Not many men are seen; indeed it is not entirely clear just how "captive" these prisoners are, given the absence of probable captors. Although this is all supposed to constitute the eyewitness testimony on which Chanca bases his general account of Carib life, he has not, it turns out, actually seen many Caribs at all. The last paragraph of the quotation certainly suggests that "eyewitness" reports are actually interpretations of accounts given by "the women who were captive on the island."⁸ As "native informants" these women can hardly be assumed to have been neutral witnesses: leaving aside the absence of a common language, captives are *prima facie* unlikely to think highly of their captors and, more pertinent still, the women had exchanged one captivity for another ("more than twenty women of the captives were taken"), and might be presumed to have said what they took their new captors to want them to say; and these new captors quickly made clear their hatred for the "natives of the island," however few of them were actually around to hate. The Phillipses' construction of all this as "fled to the Europeans for deliverance" is at best a tendentious reading in which the women's gratitude is produced by the interpreters (the words are "rejoiced greatly," which is rather different) in order to motivate the "secret telling" which provides the Europeans with the supposed "truth" of native ethnic identities.⁹ It is indeed the case, as the Phillipses say, that after this incident Chanca and other commentators began drawing a distinction between "Caribs" and other "Indians." That

this indicates the "coloring" of Spanish narratives by the complexity of New World societies remains less clear.

It might finally be noted, in dealing with this passage from Chanca, that although according to the accepted story the Caribs are less "settled" and "developed" than their neighbors, Chanca's account has them with better-made houses, better supplies, more industry, and describes them as more polished ["pulitica"]; though once again, since these are the first islanders he has seen, the comparison cannot be his. This ethnographic surplus should problematize the anthropological explanation which Chanca and his commentators give, and which becomes the "official" version; yet it is rarely mentioned.¹⁰

What the Spaniards seem to want, a desire evident in Columbus's original misidentification of the Ciguayo on his first voyage and glimpsed in his comparison reported here by Chanca, is to be able to identify a group called "los de *Caribe*" whom they think, rightly or wrongly, that they have had reported to them as fierce enemies of the "indios" with whom they have established friendly relations. The desire is to be able to see at a glance whom their presumed enemies are, a desire perhaps for the martial symbolism of European conflict; a desire frustrated by the "nakedness" of all native bodies. What comes over most strongly from Chanca's account of the days on Guadeloupe is a situation of great fluidity, political rather than ethnic perhaps, on which Chanca attempts to impose a rigidly dualistic order. Hence the almost evident relief when the captive women reveal the presence of a symbol that supposedly facilitates immediate identification, at least of Carib women.

This assumption of the *visibility* of "Caribness" quickly becomes one of the constitutive aspects of the discourse. Peter Martyr tells the story of an unprovoked Spanish attack near Nevis on an Indian canoe carrying several men and women. The Indians defend themselves with great bravery despite being outnumbered, but are eventually taken prisoner and shipped to Spain as slaves, where Martyr himself saw them:

There was no one who saw them who did not shiver with horror, so infernal and repugnant was the aspect nature and their own cruel character had given them. I affirm this after what I have myself seen, and so likewise do all those who went with me in Medina to examine them.¹¹

A long history of ethnographic description is prefigured here. "Nature" is taken to explain "aspect": cruelty is immediately translated into a set of visible features. Ambush, the struggle for life, capture, transportation, and the chains of the slave-market are mere circumstances, not worthy of attention when it comes to understanding bearing and expression. With hind-

sight, it might be thought that in many ways the little huddle of shivering humanists brave enough to "examine" the infernal natives behind the bars of a slave market says more about European attitudes than it does about the ethnic identity or cultural belonging of this set of Caribbean islanders.¹²

What is really at issue here, and why I spend so long taking apart these relatively few sentences, is the unwarranted assumption that European accounts can be read as straightforward "evidence" of a native Caribbean "reality." Chanca's report and Martyr's letters demonstrate that the "eyes" of European witnesses saw through lenses already colored by certain expectations, and that the Spanish entry into a Caribbean political situation of some complexity had an immediate and quite drastic effect on the state of affairs under description, introducing another player, of obvious power if markedly ignorant, whose presence and actions had immediately to be factored into all native calculations, responses, and words.

When Columbus first sees the wounds on native bodies his interpretation of this "evidence" is that these islands are used as slave-grounds by the Great Khan of Cathay who sends his soldiers on raids; an interpretation which both indicates Columbus's ever-imaginative willingness to prove the proximity of China, and offers a chilling foretaste of the use to which Columbus and his followers would put the Bahamian islands. The first time Columbus hears of the *canibales* who are supposed to inhabit the large island to the east of Cuba he presumes that they are these soldiers of the Great Khan who come to capture the natives: "because they did not return to their own lands they would say that they ate them" (1989:167). Since the aggressors are reported to be well-armed, Columbus assumes they are "people of intelligence." From this moment the power relationships within Spanish ideology are determined: the *canibales*, whoever they are, will be displaced as slave-traders in the area. As the Great Khan story loses feasibility, so the world-picture of the Hispaniolan *caciques* is adopted, cannibals and all; although adopted only because of the temporary alliances it facilitates. The Spaniards imposed the distinctions that interested them, between the amenable natives and the intractable, as an aspect of their decision to use the worldview of the *caciques* and *nitayno* of Hispaniola (such as they understood it) as their bridgehead into native politics (Whitehead 1992b:6). Modern scholarship has established ethnic identities on the shifting sands of these immediate and inconstant political alliances. The passages from Chanca are indeed rich in "evidence" about the disposition of native Caribbean culture in 1493, but the challenge is to read them with new attention: they do not simply "speak" their truths to us across five hundred years, despite simplistic attempts to persuade us otherwise.¹³

CONCLUSION

The thrust of my argument in this article has been that the sense made of the native Caribbean over the last five hundred years has been deeply colored by the ideological motivations of the early European colonists, whose primary concern was in distinguishing between "friendly" and "hostile" natives, but whose self-interested categorizations have provided a long-lasting if insecure foundation for the ethnographic descriptions and anthropological theories that slowly developed in their wake. Fully in the spirit of David Henige's exemplary work I have tried in a small way to burn away a few of the cornerstones of this established picture in the sceptical acid of textual analysis. This work of critique is, to my mind, an integral and indeed the primary step in any historiographic enterprise; nevertheless I want to end by at least sketching a direction for future work, which might eventually lead to the emergence of a different and more accurate picture of the native Caribbean, one less mired in the paradigms of colonial domination and less reflective of unacknowledged colonial anxieties.

The fundamental starting point for such work has to be the twin recognition that the native Caribbean has a history and that since 1492 that history has been inextricably intertwined with the colonial history of the European powers that invaded the area in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. The current dualistic image of native Caribbean societies seems on the surface to offer two opposed notions of primordial Caribbean culture. In the first case the continuity with early accounts is obvious enough: the humanist Golden Age described in Peter Martyr's account of native Hispaniola is still discernible in contemporary accounts of the Taino, powerful witness to the unchanging ideals of middle-aged academics:

They enjoyed considerable leisure, given over to dancing, singing, ballgames, and sex, and expressed themselves artistically in basketry, woodworking, pottery, and jewelry. They lived in general harmony and peace, without greed or covetousness or theft. (Sale 1991:101)

Against this "soft-headed" approach a seemingly opposed view, represented in its scholarly and popular wings by Rouse and Michener, promulgates a native Caribbean already marked by native violence, and constructs a narrative which is taken to explain the configuration of native polities that Columbus encountered in 1492. In fact, however, the two stereotypes are mutually supporting, two faces of the same coin, a counterfeit fantasy forged in the crucible of colonial expansion and offering little purchase on the actual history of the region.

To write Caribbean history before 1492 is obviously a fraught endeavour, depending largely on the hypothetical interpretation of archaeological evidence and on the careful reading of early colonial documentation. It is a sad comment on the investment still shown in the colonial stereotypes that the only recent full-scale (and extremely "hard-headed") reconstruction of the economic and class dynamics of "Taino" society (Moscoso 1986) should have been ignored by quincentenary scholarship.

To write Caribbean history after 1492 involves developing a vocabulary appropriate to the complex processes of cultural interaction within what has recently and appropriately been called "the tribal zone" (Ferguson and Whitehead 1992).¹⁴ Let me give one brief example. The suggestion implicit in my reading of Dr. Chanca's letter is that Columbus and his close colleagues were involved in what can be called an "invention of the Caribs" during the first two Spanish voyages to the Caribbean, an invention which may or may not have owed something to perceptions internal to the Caribbean polities encountered in the Bahamas, Cuba, and Hispaniola, but which certainly served as a discursive self-placement: Spain's self-appointed task, according to this understanding, was to identify and replace the Caribs as the dominant power in the region. To some extent that self-placement foundered on its misperception of Caribbean realities. The *caciques* of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico constituted the dominant powers in the region. It was them the Spaniards had to replace in a series of brutal engagements which involved some of the worst atrocities of early colonial history. The people of the *cacicazgos* demonstrated in these years their undoubted martial qualities, which has not prevented them from going down in history as the "gentle" and "peaceful" natives that Columbus had first described, so effective has been their "feminization" in colonial and subsequent scholarship (for analysis: see Moscoso 1989 and Hulme 1990).

In another sense, though, that "invention" proved remarkably successful: colonial discourse may misrecognize, but it also has the power to call its categories into being. Later descriptions, such as those provided by the French missionaries operating in the Lesser Antilles in the seventeenth century, may well have reflected changes in native society induced as the consequence of Spanish colonial policy, serving only then to reconfirm the initial discrimination and definition of the Spanish colonizers (Whitehead 1992b:2). Put more positively, the dispersal of the remnants of the native Caribbean cultures that had been socially and politically devastated by the colonial encounter and its consequences, clearly resisted and responded to those consequences in innovative ways, leading to the emergence of new ethnic units that would challenge European hegemony and eventually carve for themselves a place in modern history (Sued Badillo 1992a:2). It may well

be in this history of resistance and response that "the Caribs" find their proper place, after the fact of their invention. Writing this history is still a task for the future.

One debilitating consequence of the way in which the native Caribbean has been locked into an "ethnographic present" of 1492, divorced from five-hundred years of turbulent history, has been that the present native population has usually been ignored: some seemingly authoritative accounts of the region even appear written in ignorance of the very existence of such a population, let alone its role in colonial wars (Deagan 1990:231). Nonetheless, a native population does survive and is now contemporary with and conscious of the accounts written about its early history. At present, its primary concern may well be with the consequences of the European single market for the banana-growing that has recently supplied its economic subsistence but it has also been actively involved in the historic meetings of native American groups from all over the continent, planning their response to any thoughtless "celebrations" of the quincentenary. Over the last century the sense that has been made of the Caribbean has at best paid lip-service to the Dominican Caribs as the final remnant of their supposedly dying race. The quincentenary and its associated events may well have raised their own consciousness of their place in history to a level which will mean that future sense will at least need to take account of native Caribbean contributions to the historiography of the native Caribbean (see Frederick 1982; and cf. Gregoire & Canem 1989).

NOTES

1. This paper was given at the conference "Transatlantic Encounters: The 'Discovery' of the New World and the Old," held at Vanderbilt University on October 8-10, 1992. Thanks are due to Marshall Eakin and Vivien Green Fryd for their invitation, to the participants in that conference, and to Neil Whitehead, Gesa Mackenthun, Jalil Sued Badillo, Patricia Seed, and David Henige for their comments.

2. William and Carla Phillips' *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* (1992) is one of the better quincentenary volumes: I choose it here to demonstrate how certain assumptions about how to make sense of the native Caribbean are embedded in writing and scholarship of the highest order.

3. According to Irving Rouse (1992:21) there is no Island-Carib name problem because they "called themselves" Carib. Rouse (p. 25) accepts the traditional story of Carib "invaders ... penetrating" the Caribbean – very much along the lines reflected in Michener's chapter – because of the Island-Caribs' own origin traditions vouched for by ethnohistorians (p. 131). On the vexed question of "caribe/caniba" see Hulme & Whitehead 1992:1-6 and Whitehead 1992a.

4. This "authorized version" of the origin of the name is often repeated as a self-evident truth: for instance, Loida Figueroa (1972:44 n.21) tells it in her history of Puerto Rico; Stevens-

Arroyo quotes Figueroa (1988:x). Samuel Wilson (1990:2) states simply, but without evidential basis, "These people called themselves *Taino*, from a root word meaning 'noble' or 'prudent,'" and references Arrom (1975) – who gives the meaning of the word but says nothing about it as an ethnic marker.

5. Hernández Aquino (1977:391-92) is precise and accurate: "TAÍNO. (Tamb. Tayno.) Vocablo derivado de nitayno – los principales; los buenos -, voz esta última aprendida por los marinos españoles en el primer viaje del descubrimiento de América, y la cual usaron los acompañantes del Almirante don Cristóbal Colón en su segundo viaje a las Indias, al venir en relación con los habitantes de Guadalupe. El vocablo se aplicó más tarde a los moradores de las Antillas Mayores y luego pasó como patronímico a la etnología americana." On the place of the *nitayno* within the indigenous social structure, see Moscoso 1986:325-27.

6. Native Caribbean "cannibalism" has been much discussed recently, and I am not going to add to that debate here except to say that a careful analysis of the historical circumstances and ideological assumptions of its "reporters" is not exactly the same as claiming that they "made up the stories." For recent scepticism towards "the available evidence", see Hulme 1986:78-87; Sued Badillo 1978, 1992a and 1992b; Whitehead 1984; Myers 1984; Patterson 1991.

7. This is a reference to the incident towards the end of the first voyage when a fight breaks out between some Indians and a handful of sailors: Columbus (1989:335) judges from the appearance of the Indians – long hair, face tinted black, "that they were people from Carib and that they would eat men." These "Ciguayo" (as they are now usually referred to) remain within the early ethnographic record as something of an anomaly, falling clearly inside what was soon defined as the "Arawak" sphere of influence and therefore having to be explained as an advance raiding party or the result of some dynastic manoeuvring in order to accommodate Columbus's supposed "recognition" of their ethnic difference. If this did show the extent of Carib "advance", the argument went, then Carib bases must have existed on Puerto Rico or nearby. Gradually, however, in the light of archaeological and historical evidence, the "frontier" between Taino and Carib has been pushed east and south: compare, for example, the maps in Rouse's contributions to the *Handbook of South American Indians* (Rouse 1984c:498) where the boundary is between Vieques and St. Croix with the *The Tainos* where the boundary has been pushed back to between Montserrat and Guadeloupe (Rouse 1992:8). This moving frontier has created a space for which the new notion of "Eastern Taino" has had to be invented (see above p. 200). Cf. Figueroa 1978 and Allaire 1987.

8. The language of chivalry provides the script through which the Spaniards insert themselves into the political process of the native Caribbean as protectors of the women and enemies of the *Canibales*. One of the complexities engendered by this mode of insertion is the degree of unconscious identification between the Spaniards and the other "masculine" element within the discourse (see Hulme 1990).

9. This is an early example of a significant trope in ethnographic writing; cf. the analysis in Derrida 1976:113-15.

10. For this distinction between ethnography and anthropology, see Whitehead 1992b.

11. D'Anghera 1587:15; English in D'Anghera 1912, I:75-76 [amended]; Spanish in Gil & Varela, 1984:55; Chanca tells the same story, see Gil & Varela 1984:162.

12. There is a direct connection between Peter Martyr's occlusion of the circumstances in which he witnesses Carib "aspect" and the kind of description in the *Handbook of South American Indians* that can say of the Caribs: "When at ease they tended to be melancholy; when aroused they became truculent and vindictive" (Rouse 1948b:549). In both cases the context of the description disappears under the tyranny of the ethnographic verb "to be": the

colonial history of slave-raiding, massacre, and attempted extirpation are as nothing to the authoritative tone in which scientific discourse dissects "being." Rouse points out that his account deals with 1650 to 1700, but it never seems to occur to him that Carib behavior might in any way have been affected by two hundred years of intermittent fighting against a variety of European powers with designs on their land. The "truculence" is never itself interrogated.

13. Recent years have produced what will surely prove to be the beginning of a series of major re-readings of early colonial texts in which textual scholarship of the highest order is combined with historically-informed and theoretically-aware analysis: eg. Seed 1990; Adorno 1992; Mig-nolo 1992; cf. Henige & Zamora 1989. What needs adding to this work is the perception produced by recent anthropological theory that the confusions in attempts to represent "other" cultures tend to reveal at least as much about the unconscious self-definition of those doing the representing as they do about those supposedly represented (cf. Clifford 1988). Some recognition is needed that work in this area is no less "scientific," and no less concerned with real historical processes, than positivistic historiography, so often revealed in recent years as naive in its understanding of what it constitutes as evidence.

14. The relevant vocabulary of the "tribal zone" involves terms such as "ethnic soldiering," "secondary tribalization," and "polyethnicity" (see also Haas 1990). The beginnings of a Carib-bean history alert to these questions can be found in the work of Jalil Sued Badillo (1978, 1986, 1992a, 1992b). Examples of other important recent work pertaining to the native Caribbean are Keegan 1989; Davis & Goodwin 1990; Boucher 1992; Whitehead 1992a. Rouse's own work has changed over the last few years, becoming much more amenable to the idea of local developments as explaining cultural change (1986:106; 1989:391); recognizing the Island-Caribs as a "problem" (1992:131); and noting the use by Columbus and the colonial authorities of the term "Carib" as a synonym for "hostile" (1992:155, 157).

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SHAMANS, SHEPHERDS, SCIENTISTS, AND OTHERS IN
JAMAICAN FICTION

History, in the West Indian plantation context, Sylvia Wynter (1971:95) has observed, is itself "a fiction written, dominated, controlled by forces external to itself". As this observation implies, history may intentionally be designed to organize reality in a particular way by disseminating specific ideas. Accounts of events which are designed to organize reality and impose a way of thinking are classifiable as myths.¹ The mythic dimension of history appears not only in its capacity to incorporate and transmit dominant cultural values and ideologies but also in the changes in historical perspectives which occur when social norms are altered, and old ideologies are superseded. Such changes in the perspectives on the past are also observable in fiction written over a period of time. This is particularly true of West Indian novels which, as Kenneth Ramchand (1971:103) has observed, "even when they are concerned with contemporary reality, nearly all ... are engaged with history."

An important area of Jamaican plantation history relates to African religious practices which, under slavery, were collectively referred to as Obeah. Obeah practitioners, in claiming the power to bring supernatural influences to bear on everyday circumstances, exercised the functions of priests, healers, and magicians. Members of white society recognized the unifying force of African religious beliefs, in slave insurrections, and the Obeah practitioner's leadership role in fomenting these rebellions. Laws were thus enacted to restrict the activities and lessen the authority of these practitioners. In the aftermath of the 1760 rebellion, for example, severe penalties were decreed for persons practicing Obeah, and in a context of endemic slave

insurrections, even black preachers of Christian persuasion had their activities restricted by law (Brathwaite 1971:162-63).

In nineteenth-century fiction written about Jamaica, by whites, Obeah practitioners have been depicted primarily as sorcerers who use their influence to recruit spies in the Great House and to create disaffection within the slave community. In such fiction, little distinction is made between different African religious observances. Obeah and Myal are grouped together; the Myal men being simply "another class of impostors" (Hamley 1862:155). Because of their involvement in resistance to white oppression, Obeah practitioners² are perceived only in roles in which they harness malevolent forces for anti-social purposes. This perspective on the Obeah practitioner, in the literary context, served to reinforce that which was established by law and justified the harsh measures which were adopted to bring them under control.

The oppositional stance of Obeah and Myal practitioners to the values of white society, during slavery, made them significant figures in the folk/popular tradition. In the post-emancipation period, Myal was increasingly regarded as a force working counter to Obeah which became identified more specifically with practices which were ill-intentioned and self-serving.³ This distinction between Obeah and Myal has been reflected in twentieth-century novels where the practitioner, in his function as religious leader or spiritualist with healing powers, is distinguished from the sorcerer or wizard who has a harmful influence. Portraits of the Obeah practitioner became increasingly complex in the twentieth century, as fiction came to be written by Jamaican creoles who were often engaged in a type of historical revisionism.

The discussion below examines the evolution of the character of the Obeah practitioner in a selection of novels set in Jamaica and written in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It relates the changing image of the Obeah practitioner to changes in social outlook and demonstrates one way in which the literary product responds to the context of altered social relationships. As mentioned above, powers which were once attributed to a single individual may be distributed among two or more characters in a novel. Characters may be variously identified, by such titles as Shepherd, Elder, Brother, Mother, or Prophet without a specific mention of Obeah.

A tradition of portraying the Obeah practitioner in fiction was well established by the mid-nineteenth century. Obeah practitioners were usually depicted as persons of advanced age, hideous aspect, and venal nature.⁴ A notable exception is Hamel, the central figure in the anonymous novel *Hamel, the Obeah Man* (1827), which appeared at the height of the anti-slavery campaign. Hamel, a model of elegance, dignity, and composure has a reassuring physical appearance:

The dealer in magic was of a slight and elegant make, though very small of stature ... His age was at least sixty; but the lines which that had traced on his features indicated, notwithstanding his profession, no feeling hostile to his fellow-creatures, at war with human nature or dissatisfied with himself ... (1827:28-29)

Hamel, the Obeah Man, as Edward Brathwaite (1970:67) has pointed out, is an "anti-Missionary tract" which is critical of Non-Conformist missionary activity. The depiction of the Obeah practitioner's character in this novel clearly serves an ulterior purpose and is linked to a highly topical issue. Such connections between characterization in the novel and issues of contemporary interest can be observed again and again. In general, however, portraits of Obeah practitioners reflect the hostility towards them which existed among members of the local white society. Whether they appear briefly as figures in an exotic landscape or are depicted specifically as disturbing elements within the landscape, accounts of their activities are designed to demonstrate both the absurdity of their claims to extraordinary powers and the gullibility of other Negroes whom they are able to deceive.

A typical portrayal of the Obeah practitioner is given in *Captain Clutterbuck's Champagne* (1861-62) which is set in the 1830s, and details some of the intricacies of color and the presumed effects of climate on character. The author of this novel, Col. William G. Hamley, resided in Jamaica at various times between 1833 and 1864 (D'Costa & Lalla 1989:111, 140). *Captain Clutterbuck's Champagne* depicts the activities of an Obeahman, Congo, and makes special reference to the Obeah practitioner's status during slavery. The narrator observes for example:

the power of Obi over the negro mind has worked many a social and political convulsion, and caused sufficient anxiety to lawgivers. The statutes of Jamaica direct the severest penalties against it ... Its secret has never been fathomed by the white man. (1862:155)

In this novel, the Obeahman is said to be guilty of killing and incapacitating fellow slaves, among other things. This idea of Obeah practitioners as individuals who exploit and injure their own people survives in the fiction until the 1960s.

One of the most sustained portrayals of the Obeah practitioner appears in Mayne Reid's novel *The Maroon or Planter Life in Jamaica* (1873) which was first published in 1862, one year after *Captain Clutterbuck's Champagne*. *The Maroon or Planter Life in Jamaica* is set in Western Jamaica, near Montego Bay, during slavery. The narrator speculates on the nature of the Obeahman's activity and his proper nomenclature (1873:12). His counterparts, it is explained, are "the 'medicine man' of the North American Indians, the 'piuche' of the South, the 'rain maker' of the Cape, the 'fetish

man' of the Guinea Coast." The Obeahman is thus recognized as a shaman figure "known by as many other titles as there are tribes of uncivilized men." The narrator notes that the Obeah practitioner is usually referred to as "professor," but concludes that "practitioner" is the correct term, in the Jamaican context:

'Professor', though often used in speaking of these charlatans, is not a correct title. To have professed it – at least in the hearing of whites – would have been attended with peril: since it was punishable by the death penalty. Practitioner is a more appropriate appellation.

The narrator's witticism serves to document the popularly held view of the Obeahman as a professor or scientist, which still persists in Jamaica.

The practitioner in *The Maroon or Planter Life in Jamaica* is Chakra, an old "Coromantee" who is identified as a Myal Man. Chakra claims to be able to restore dead bodies to life. At the beginning of the novel, Chakra is reportedly dead. He had been tried and condemned to death, the narrator suggests, because his master with whom he had collaborated in several nefarious activities wanted to be rid of him. In the subsequent action, Chakra functions as a submerged evil influence which reappears to frustrate the intentions of the "good" characters and delay the satisfactory outcome of the love stories which constitute the plot and sub-plot. He thus has a function within the structure of the novel and is a useful means of establishing character. White people like the pen-keeper, Jacob Jessuron, who consort with him are clearly evil. There is little mystery to Chakra's resurrection, since he had not been executed but had been chained to a rock and left to starve to death. His escape is engineered by the pen-keeper who wishes to use his services as a poisoner, for Chakra's "magical" powers are further explained by his skill in distilling poisons. This skill is also his means of penetrating the security of the Great House, using gullible female slaves for whom he concocts love philters.

The picture of the Obeah practitioner as a Satanic influence countering "civilized" Christian values is both expanded and altered in Grant Allen's *In All Shades* (1904), originally published in 1886. Allen who spent "some of the most impressionable years of his life" (Caine 1908:60) in Jamaica used this experience in more than one work of fiction.⁵ *In All Shades* is ostensibly set in Trinidad, but various details mentioned in the novel suggest the Jamaican context. This impression is reinforced by Allen's use of place names such as Agualta Estate and Wag Water which suggest a Jamaican context. The Obeah practitioner in the novel, Delgado, a Coromantyn who has been liberated from a Cuban slave trader, is given a fairly prominent part in the action, though his role is not important to the structure of the plot. The

period is that of the late nineteenth century and there are vague references to the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865.

Delgado's character is developed in the context of the debate on African character and gloomy predictions of the Negro's reversion to barbarism. In some respects, he is a throwback to Hamel; he is not described as physically repulsive, and he is able to converse with the educated hero of the novel, in Arabic. The narrator suggests that Delgado, originally a Muslim, has adopted Christianity as a means of relating to the creole slaves. Like Chakra, Delgado makes love philters and thus recruits his spies in the Great House. Most of his energy is spent in fomenting rebellion, however, and there is no collaboration between him and the master class. He is relentless in his effort to bring about the time "when black man will find him heart break out ... Den him sweep away buckra, an' bloodhound, an' all before him an' seize de country, colour for colour" (1904:44). Despite the immensity of Delgado's anger, a whip in the hands of a white man is enough to cow him. Ultimately, he dies of rage, having effected nothing useful for those over whom he had assumed leadership. In the context of the debate on the future of the Negro, the futility of Delgado's gestures is intended to be reassuring.⁶ Moreover, his case demonstrates the error of bringing the African out of his native culture; outside this context which induces a spirit of rebellion, Delgado's diabolical instincts, it is implied, would not have surfaced.

As the case of Delgado suggests, interest in Obeah was kept alive partly by the continued arrival of indentured Africans between 1841 and 1865. In the novel, *Mafoota*⁷, by Dolf Wyllarde (1907), for example, the Obeah practitioner is David Wilts who is referred to on more than one occasion as "the Old African."⁸ Wyllarde, a prolific novelist who wrote a variety of novels set in different parts of the world, uses this character mainly to provide local color. Wilts is of almost peripheral importance in a novel which is primarily concerned with "the ugly thing" (1907:94), miscegenation.

David Wilts conforms to the stereotype "an old disreputable Negro ... dressed in a filthy shirt and old patched trousers, and his face hideous and repulsive as an old monkey's," with a cast of countenance which is "so bestial as to be one of sheer horror" (1907:120-21). Wilts is first seen talking furtively to Lily Scott, the colored housekeeper, whose "animal" eyes, despite the whiteness of her complexion betray "an ugly gleam of inherited instinct and unknown blood traits" (1907:67). By consorting with the Old African, Lily Scott establishes the indelibility of the "taint" in her blood. Thus, although Wilts' part in the action is slight, his cast of character serves to strengthen the unfavorable impression of the mulatto, which the novelist wishes to convey. The description of Wilts' appearance and the suggestions about his behavior also reinforce notions about the level of social and moral

conduct among Negroes, a much debated topic in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁹

Wilts is also mentioned in connection with a disturbance on a neighboring property and is being sought on suspicion of poisoning cows. As in earlier novels, the narrator discredits the Obeah practitioner's claim to supernatural powers by associating him with poisoning. Though recognizing his influence among his own people, the narrator speaks disparagingly of the tools of his trade: "Eggshells and grave dirt and bullock's blood," and concludes that all that Wilts is ultimately guilty of is "frightening other black people" (1907:127).

Novelists often emphasize the venality of the Obeah practitioner. This is the main characteristic which is mentioned, for example, in Alice Spinner's *A Study in Colour* (1894).¹⁰ Spinner had a strong interest in Afro-Jamaican folkways, but her depiction of the Obeah practitioner in *A Study in Colour* is relatively superficial. This may be due to the fact that the book constitutes a series of sketches rather than a novel. True to the nineteenth-century stereotype, the Obeah practitioner in *A Study in Colour* is old and physically unattractive:

There was an old black Obeah man, who lived in the next village. She knew he was a bad old man ... Certainly one of these days his master, "de big debbil Satan" would take him for his own ... Angie grew more afraid than she had been before at the sight of the ugly old negro with his one earring, who sat all day in the sun and did not work, and yet grew richer than any one else in the parish. (1894:49)

In Spinner's book, which is mainly about the admiration which darker-skinned persons have for lighter-skinned ones, black characters are shown shrinking from the presence of the Obeahman. They distinguish, for example, between the "card cutter" who is useful in helping to recover lost items and the Obeah man who dies "an' go to hell" (1894:96).

This idea of the ugly, old Obeah man, who lacks visible employment but continues to grow rich at the expense of poor people, continues until the middle of the twentieth century. This may be observed both at the level of popular literature¹¹ and in novels like Claude McKay's *Banana Bottom*, originally published in 1933, which belongs to the Jamaican classical tradition. Before McKay's description of the Obeah practitioner, however, comes that of H.G. De Lisser who altered the stereotype. De Lisser views the Obeah practitioner's role from an historical perspective in *The White Witch of Rosehall*, first published in 1929.

Unlike the writers whose works have been discussed so far, H.G. De Lisser was Jamaican. Ostensibly, De Lisser continues the tradition of the Obeah practitioner as a Satanic influence working against "civilized"

values, that is, official policies regarding the maintenance of law and order, and accepted codes of behavior within the white caste. In the novel, however, De Lisser juxtaposes a white witch, Annie Palmer, the Mistress on the plantation, to a black Obeahman, Takoo, and shows "civilized" values to be equally threatened by a member of the white caste. Annie Palmer exercises her occult "powers" solely because of her will to dominate others; Takoo exercises his on behalf of persons who depend on him, to ensure the survival of others as well as himself. Takoo thus has wide shamanist functions, while Annie Palmer's role is limited to that of a sorceress.

The action of *The White Witch of Rosehall* is set in St. James, in the two weeks leading up to the December slave rebellion of 1831 which was centered in the Western parishes. De Lisser's portrayal of Takoo, the Obeah practitioner conforms, in some respects, to that popularized by the nineteenth-century novelists. Takoo is identified as a Guinea man and, like David Wilts of *Mafoota*, is referred to as "the Old African" (1982:53, 113). Unlike Wilts, however, Takoo is a figure of considerable presence, "A tall, gaunt, savage-looking black man, with grizzled hair and heavy features" (1982:107). De Lisser does not describe Takoo as ugly. Takoo, like his nineteenth-century counterparts, maintains control within his constituency of the exploited and ill-used by occasional, secret collaboration with the occupant of the Great House. He is implicated, for example, in the murder of one of Annie Palmer's husbands. As in the cases of Chakra and Delgado, his omniscience is accounted for by the fact that he keeps spies in the Great House. His rituals, though useful in demonstrating his hold over his people, are not, the novel shows, the true source of his power. His real tools for carrying out his purposes are poison and physical force. De Lisser, however, attempts to convey the strength of the beliefs which control Takoo's adherents, although his descriptions of their "delirious howls" and, "ejaculations of frenzy" (1982:204) also suggest that they constitute a lunatic fringe.

In general, however, De Lisser conveys the pervasive influence of the Obeah practitioner within the slave community. Takoo defeats Annie Palmer in the contest to control the spirits of the slaves. At his instigation, the seemingly submissive regain their spirits and revolt. De Lisser gives Takoo an active role in the December rebellion to which the killing of Annie Palmer is linked. Takoo tells the other slaves:

It is the white man who have to look for themself now, for we are all free from tonight – every slave in Jamaica is free – and we taking to the mountains to fight until the damn slaveowners here acknowledge our freedom. It come from England an' they keeping it back. Very well, we will take it ourself, even if some of us have to die for it. I expect to die, but dese men with me will live free for ever. And before I die dis woman will; she will go before me. (1982:244)

Takoo thus succeeds where Delgado failed, and he emphasizes the right to be free rather than the settling of a personal score, as Delgado does.

In his ability to initiate action, Takoo departs from the nineteenth-century stereotype of the Obeahman. His incipient political role will be investigated in later portrayals of the Obeah practitioner. De Lisser also presents a version of an historical event which is in marked contrast to that of modern historians who usually mention the teaching of the Christian missionaries, which was reinterpreted by the slaves, as the catalyst in the December 1831 rebellion.¹² In associating Takoo with this revolt, De Lisser links him with the tradition of slave revolts, since the eighteenth century, and highlights the political role of the religious leader and healer in the Jamaican folk tradition.

It might be expected from his involvement in the Harlem Renaissance and his celebration of folk experience in both poetry and prose, that Claude McKay's characterization of the Obeah practitioner would vary significantly from the nineteenth-century mode. However, it conforms more to the nineteenth-century stereotype than De Lisser's. On the one hand, McKay's depiction of the Obeah practitioner may be related to his treatment of religion generally in a novel like *Banana Bottom*, where it is shown to have more of a "shackling than liberating" (1961:73) influence. On the other hand, his use of the stereotype is an aspect of his literary method. Thus, Wumba, the Obeah practitioner, in *Banana Bottom* appears in the guise of the venal charlatan. Moreover, he is not only unmasked but turns to the Christian "magic" when his own fails.

McKay's description of Wumba's physical appearance, paraphernalia, and dwelling seem to undermine any attempts to view this character seriously. The narrator notes (1961:136), for example,

He was a stout junk of a man, opaque and heavy as ebony. Two goat skins were strapped around his loins and from the waist up he was naked except for a necklace of hog's teeth and bird's beaks. His hands and forehead were stained with mangrove dye and his hair was an enormous growth.

This description, which suggests a mid-nineteenth-century context rather than the early twentieth century in which the novel is set, associates Wumba with the popular image of the African witch doctor. His paraphernalia includes "buzzard wings, hawk's feet, dried lizard and snake skins" (1961:136), and the harmless Jamaica species of snake which "all Obeahmen keeps as pets" (1961:127). The isolation of Wumba's cave symbolizes his position in the society – beyond the pale, though secretly involved in the life of the community. Wumba thus functions as the symbol of an idea; he represents one side in a war between the Christian God and Obi who share the

same constituency: "The people worshipped the Christian God-of-Good-and-Evil on Sunday, and in the shadow of the night they went to invoke the power of the African God of Evil by the magic of the sorcerer" (1961:185).

The novel suggests that neither Obeah, "a form of primitive superstition," nor Christianity, "a form of civilized superstition" (1961:124), is of further benefit to the community. Both are involved in the business of deluding individuals and extracting money from them. It is in this context of a scepticism about religion that McKay discredits the Obeah practitioner. Even when religion is dissociated from the magic of the sorcerer, as in the case of the thin little black revivalist woman who interrupts the meeting held by the white revivalist and draws away his congregation with her drums, it leads nowhere¹³. The "contagious clamour" of her drums lead only to trance or self-flagellation.

Although, the Obeah practitioner in *Banana Bottom* has no place in an increasingly secular context, Obeah is recognized as a link with the African past. Squire Gensir, McKay's representation of an enlightened European outlook, tells the heroine of the novel, Bitá, for example, "Obeah is part of your folklore, like your Anancy tales and your digging jammas. And your folklore is the spiritual link between you and your ancestral origin" (1961:125). In other words, Obeah may survive as part of a secular tradition, like the tea meeting, which is referred to frequently in the novel. McKay's depiction of the Obeah practitioner, like his depiction of the Christian missionaries, demonstrates the ineffectiveness of magic in the face of certain social realities. Although he has not altered the image of the Obeahman, he raises questions about the Obeah practitioner's role, which are pursued by novelists of the 1950s and 1960s, in relation to an increasingly urbanized laboring class.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the mood of re-appraisal in the academic context and the growing interest in folk culture reflected an effort to re-evaluate the African past. As early as 1929, the anthropologist Martha Beckwith had examined the traditions of Obeah and Myal, and in the 1930s and 1940s, Zora Neale Hurston and Katherine Dunham recorded favorable impressions of the Maroon medicine man.¹⁴ Interest in the properties of herbal medicine and the search for alternative therapies for a variety of illnesses have also tended to legitimize practices associated with the folk healer.¹⁵ Such developments within the society are part of the currency in the intellectual circles to which writers usually belong. Thus, with the increased understanding of the reasons for the hostility of white society to cultural practices which it could not fathom, the Obeah practitioner is, in the novels of the 1950s and 1960s, often cast in the role of one sustaining community values against interlopers who may be brown or black people. In this con-

text of approaching or newly won national independence, the Obeah practitioner's role is also investigated as an aspect of the question of leadership and the reconciliation of diverse cultural traditions.

In novels of the 1950s and 1960s investigation of the role of the magico-religious leader, who is associated with folk tradition, often has a political dimension. The intention to reassess the Obeah practitioner's role may be indicated by the opposition of the figure of the spiritualist and healer who exercises a beneficent influence to that of the sorcerer who preys on ignorant, poor people. This is demonstrated, for example, in the opposition of Brother Man and Brother Ambo in Roger Mais's novel from 1954 *Brother Man*, Prophet Moses and Ambrose, the "obeahman," in Sylvia Wynter's novel from 1962 *The Hills of Hebron*, and Brother Solomon and Shepherd John in Orlando Patterson's *The Children of Sisyphus* (1964). Several functions may be combined in the role of the magico-religious leader who becomes the focus of interest, as is demonstrated in Andrew Salkey's *A Quality of Violence* originally published in 1959 and Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron*.

In *A Quality of Violence* and *The Hills of Hebron*, the authors explore the leadership potential of Obeah practitioners or spiritual leaders within folk communities where they have charismatic appeal. The portrait of Dada Johnson in Salkey's novel and Prophet Moses in Wynter's novel are clearly related to the activities of revivalist leaders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Characterization of these folk heroes focuses both on the influence which their presumed powers gives them in the folk community and on the source and authenticity of their powers.

A Quality of Violence is set at the turn of the twentieth century in a context of class antagonisms which are aggravated by severe economic hardship. The setting is St. Thomas in a period of sustained drought. The activities of the central figure in the novel, Brother Parkin, a "small planter" and usurer, bring him into close contact with Dada Johnson, leader of the local Pocomania group. Parkin is the only person in the community who knows that Johnson, "an obeah man who preferred to be called 'a spiritualist and healer of the afflicted and the discontented'" (1978:36), is an ex-convict and confidence trickster. Parkin, who is a brown man, takes a tolerant view of Johnson's activities, recognizing that his meeting-yard plays a vital role in the life of the underprivileged. Parkin questions, however, whether it is possible to "do good for people" while ignoring "code and custom" (1978:41). Johnson's main fear is that he will one day fail to meet the expectations of the people in the meeting-yard who rely on him, and so lose his constituency. It is this fear which pushes him to excessive displays of his "powers" and results in his death by flagellation.

The significance of Dada Johnson's meeting-yard emerges when his wife, Mother Johnson, attempts to take over his role. In her bid to assume his "powers," she stirs up latent class and color antagonisms which Dada had held in check. Mother Johnson has a brief moment of triumph when she almost destroys Parkin, one of the "milk coffee and bush-tea brown people" (1978:198), by bringing false charges against him.¹⁶ The tables are turned on her almost immediately by Miss Gatha, a member of the meeting-yard who tells the truth which exonerates Brother Parkin. However, the relationship which existed in Dada Johnson's time between Parkin, one of the "brown man class" and the leader of the meeting-yard cannot, as subsequent events demonstrate, be restored. In challenging Mother Johnson's version of events, Miss Gatha aligns herself with forces outside the meeting-yard. These outside forces are ultimately willing to tolerate Mother Johnson, but her own "black Judas people" (1978:204) kill her because of her failure to meet their expectations. Mother Johnson who insistently identifies herself with Africa, in the final pages of the novel, rejects salvation through the agency of Parkin who wants to "hold her in check and keep her under constant supervision, not kill her" (1978:200).

A Quality of Violence thus depicts a decline in the authority of the magico-religious leader, and his increased distance from other sectors of the society. The mutual tolerance which existed between Parkin and Dada Johnson is destroyed when Mother Johnson assumes leadership in the meeting-yard. The dramatic behavior which Dada Johnson and his wife adopt, in order to compel loyalty to the meeting-yard, indicates that the tradition which they represent is increasingly irrelevant in the modern secular context. Moreover, Mother Johnson's attempt to preserve the legend surrounding Dada Johnson, a self-confessed confidence trickster, makes her both victim and perpetrator of a hoax. The sense of catastrophe in the meeting-yard is reinforced by the images of recurrent natural disasters in the novel.

In *The Hills of Hebron*, the social divisions in the wider society are reflected in the distribution of adherents across religious groups in the community of Cockpit Centre. The central figure is Prophet Moses Barton whose name indicates a biblical prototype and whose activities recall those of the local Revivalist, Alexander Bedward. Prophet Moses, "a cavalier of the impossible" (1984:106) is the leader of the New Believers, an Afro-Christian religious group, who symbolically leave their past behind to form the new community of Hebron. Prophet Moses' people dissociate themselves from the Pukkumina group which is led by Brother Ambrose, who is identified as an Obeahman¹⁷, and from the European-supported Non-conformist churches which are represented in Cockpit Centre by Rev. Brook

and his wife Cecilia. The more prosperous of Rev. Brooke's congregation drift to the Anglican church which is situated fifteen miles away.

In *The Hills of Hebron*, which covers a more extended period than Salkey's *A Quality of Violence*, Prophet Moses' political role is more explicit than Dada Johnson's. His activities have, at one point, been interrupted by imprisonment for being a political agitator and "lunatic." He retains his congregation because of his capacity to inspire his followers, but his leadership role is also linked to the issue of land for the people. Moses thus has a wider range of functions than Dada Johnson. Having symbolically led a community out of bondage, he supervises its transition from one stage of development to another, mediates between spiritual and material concerns, negotiating with outside interests to ensure the community's survival. However, he can neither fully separate the community from its past nor prevent contact with new influences which are asserting themselves.

Like other magico-religious leaders before him, Prophet Moses comes to doubt his ability to control his followers, whose faith in him is directly linked to his ability to inspire them spiritually and to ensure their material well-being. Moses feels challenged when he encounters a new secularly-oriented populist message which bases its appeal on economic rather than racial issues. Like Dada Johnson, he attempts to contrive a miracle which will restore the confidence of his uneasy congregation and, as a result, destroys himself. The failure of his gesture becomes a severe test of faith for his adherents.

In depicting Prophet Moses' futile attempt to reassert his type of leadership, Wynter, like Salkey, gives a pessimistic view of the tradition which he represents. Moses, like his nineteenth-century prototype, is, moreover, guilty of complicity with outsiders in his effort to keep his community intact and protect his position as leader. He condones Rev. Brooke's rape of Gloria Chin-Queen in exchange for Rev. Brooke's services in procuring land for the community in Hebron. Underlying the characterization of the magico-religious leader here, as in Salkey's novel is also the figure of Anancy using weapons of the weak, lying and deceit, to survive. Prophet Moses' successors fail to hold the community of Hebron together, partly because they lack the capacity to inspire its members, and partly because his wife, Miss Gatha whose orientation is materialistic rather than spiritual, wants to ensure the succession for her son, Isaac. Isaac grows up, however, to be quite unsympathetic to the goals of the community, which he abandons.

In the novels by Salkey and Wynter discussed above, which were written in a period of heightened national awareness, the magico-religious leader is again cast in the role of the hopeful charlatan. Despite their pessimistic outlook, however, both novels show a recognition of this figure as an ele-

ment of continuity within the folk experience, and as a representative of an African-Jamaican tradition.

Since the 1960s, the relationship between the African and European components of Jamaican culture has been further altered. This development, which is due partly to the continuing research into folk culture and the penetration of the middle class by Rastafarianism, especially since the 1970s, has also affected the portrayal of Obeah practitioners in Jamaican novels. This can be demonstrated, for example, by an examination of Orlando Patterson's *Die the Long Day* (1972) and Erna Brodber's *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* (1980) and *Myal* (1988). In addition to being part of a tradition to be re-evaluated, the magico-religious leader in these novels is used to suggest a viable alternative tradition. Patterson concentrates on the Obeah practitioners problem-solving role in the context of slavery, while Brodber imagines him as the repository of values and beliefs which affect the well-being of the whole society.

In his first novel, *The Children of Sisyphus*, Orlando Patterson had suggested the powerlessness of leadership emerging within the folk environment. Shamanist functions are distributed between Brother Solomon the Rastafarian, who uses the "holy herb" to open the doors of perception, and Shepherd John of the balmyard, who is a further example of the venal charlatan. Brother Solomon's philosophy is defeatist; the effects of spiritual theft which he perceives cannot be counteracted within the social context. His responses are escape on a daily basis by smoking the "holy herb" and, in his more "ambitious fantasies," a return to Africa. Shepherd John is eventually killed by his followers. The outlook is similar to that in Salkey's and Wynter's novels.

In Patterson's *Die the Long Day*, which appeared eight years after *The Children of Sisyphus*, there is a noticeable change of outlook. The novel focuses on aspects of the slave past and shows some of the values which continued to shape the strategies for survival of a suppressed group, in a context of adversity. The medium of communication within the group is Africanus, the Myal leader, who is depicted both as a spiritual leader increasing perception through ritual observances, and as a herbalist/healer administering therapies for mental and physical disorders. Africanus' resilience of spirit and capacity to survive are associated with Anancy. As in *The Children of Sisyphus*, there are disparate goals among the members of the oppressed community, but Africanus remains a common point of reference for all.

In Erna Brodber's novels, there is a shift in focus from the racial experience to the broader colonial experience as shared by the whole society. *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* centres on the alienating effects of the

formal educational system and its religious dimension. *Myal* is more concerned with the potential for leadership and social direction within the folk community. The opposition in the second novel is not, as in McKay's *Banana Bottom*, for example, between organized religion brought in by European missionaries and African derived religion, but between helpful and destructive uses of knowledge and power. There is a similar recognition, however, of religion and the education associated with it as forms of mind control.

Where Patterson's novels suggest the limited power of leaders within the folk community (Africanus can help people to endure oppression, but he cannot change the circumstances), Brodber's novels show their influence reaching beyond it to affect other sectors of the society. Baba Ruddock in *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* gains access to academic-intellectual circles.¹⁸ Baba Ruddock who is associated both with Rastafarianism and Obeah links two examples of African-creole expression, and implies the reinforcement of one by the other. Baba Ruddock helps Nellie, the heroine of the novel in her traumatic struggle for self-definition which induces a state of mental and physical collapse. Nellie's character, which is developed to show the effects of the colonial legacy and the conflict of African and European values on the individual life, also reflects those of the society establishing its identity. Baba Ruddock's penetration of the academic community and his role in helping Nellie regain a state of mental and physical well-being may be related to changes in social outlook in the 1970s.

In *Myal*, Mass Cyrus, the spiritualist and healer also gains access to a sector of the society from which he has traditionally been excluded when the "brown people" need his assistance in curing one of their group. Ella, the sick individual, like Nellie, has a representative function in the novel. Ella is both physically and culturally a mulatto. The product of a casual union between an Irish policeman and a black peasant woman, she has, like her society, been created within the context of inequalities between white and black. The novel suggests several parallels between Ella's progress as an individual and historical developments within creole society (Johnson 1992). Like Baba Ruddock, Mass Cyrus treats mental and physical conditions which are directly related. The effect of the cure, as in Nellie's case, is to increase perception and redirect the life of the individual/organism. The combination of functions of the spiritualist and physician in a figure like Mass Cyrus indicates a new direction for leadership, one which ensures that preoccupation with the inspirational role of the leader does not outweigh concern with the practicalities of survival.

Mass Cyrus is a representative figure rather than an individually developed character. Brodber does not give a physical description of this figure

and so avoids the impression of strangeness which usually undermined attempts to portray the figure of the magico-religious leader or the Obeah practitioner seriously. This avoidance of physical description also brings Mass Cyrus closer to a mythic prototype, "the wise old man" of folklore and his counterpart in other cultures, the variously represented shaman. The idea of the wise old man is also represented in the character of Ole African, whose name links Brodber's portrayal of Obeah to the earlier tradition of depicting the Obeah practitioner, and indicates her intention to provide a counterbalance.¹⁹ Mass Cyrus and Ole African are two forces working together, and are not opposed in function as Obeah and Myal were in the post-emancipation period. Brodber thus recalls the original position of white society which did not distinguish between Obeah and Myal. In doing this, she transforms their unity of purpose into a positive value, in the changed historical context.

The changing image of the Obeah practitioner in novels describing Jamaican experience are, as we have shown, related to developments within the society and a changing perspective on the past. In nineteenth-century novels, the character of the Obeah practitioner was important primarily as an aspect of local color, and an example of outlandish practices in which Negroes indulged. In the early-twentieth-century novel, the character of the Obeah practitioner could become a structural element in the novel, gaining meaning from the practitioner's relationship to other characters, as in Claude McKay's *Banana Bottom*. In novels of the late 1950s and 1960s, Obeah practitioners are depicted as elements of continuity within an Afro-creole tradition and their roles are seriously explored in relation to the question of leadership. In more recent novels, the Obeah practitioner, as a symbol of the capacity to survive and an element of continuity with the African and the slave past, is portrayed as an enabling force and an alternative source of knowledge. This progression in the role of the Obeah practitioner, as depicted in the novel, demonstrates the shaping force of the prevailing historical outlook and a way in which ideology is articulated through fiction.

NOTES

1. This definition combines views of myth as a way of "classifying and organizing reality" (Eagleton, 1983:104) and as a widespread, though not always false idea, influencing social behavior.
2. Obeah women are also referred to as, for example, Mammy Venus, who is mentioned in Henrietta Jenkins's *Cousin Stella*.
3. Myal, which has been distinguished as community-oriented and benign in its influence, was

increasingly, in the post-emancipation period, associated with African derived medical practices which had been beneficial during slavery. See, for example, Schuler (1979).

4. This is specifically remarked on in Mayne Reid's *The Maroon or Planter Life in Jamaica* (1973:12): "Universally they [obeah practitioners] were persons of advanced age and hideous aspect; the uglier the more successful in pursuit of their criminal calling." Attitudes to obeah practitioners were ambivalent. Frederick Charles Tomlinson includes this footnote to his text in *The Helions or the Deeds of Rio* (1903:108), a satire describing local politics in the post-emancipation period: "*Obeahman*. A special local statute, designed exclusively in the interests of this personage, describes him as 'one who for gain pretends to the use of supernatural power.' This, at first blush, looks not unlike a clumsy attempt at a false pretence. But it was not so deemed in Princeville: with the result that the obeahman enjoyed an enormous vogue not at all fair to other criminals."

5. See, for example, Allen (1893), *Ivan Greet's Masterpiece*. In *The Cruise of the Port Kingston* (1908:60), William Ralph Hall Caine has also noted that Allen's Jamaican experience "provided colouring for more than one entertaining novel and inspiration for much more enduring work achieved in that busy life." Caine also mentions, "Mr. Frankfort Moore, in the role of novelist," and Miss Dolf Wyllarde who drew upon "the same inexhaustible fount."

6. The planned insurrection, the text discloses, fails because of "the hereditary respect for European blood which is instinctive in the West Indian negro's nature" (1904:250), and because the negroes recognize Harry Noel, who is assumed to be white, as a brown man, and are reluctant to kill one of their own blood. In this connection, an observation by the narrator in F. Frankfort Moore's *Shipmates in Sunshine* might be noted. Here the narrator refers to "what the negroes have happily always lacked – a leader" (1903:98).

7. My thanks to Barry Higman who mentioned this novel to me.

8. Note Erna Brodber's use of the name Ole African in her novel, *Myal* (1988).

9. Views on the future of "the Negro race" were extremely pessimistic towards the end of the nineteenth century. See for example, H. A. Will, *Constitutional Change in the British West Indies 1880-1903* (1970:244-45). In the view of the narrator of Frankfort Moore's *Shipmates in Sunshine* (1903:88-89), the West Indian negro is the "least satisfactory of nature's handiwork: He seems to have no intelligence, and only that form of cunning which is an insult to the intelligence of the people against whom it is directed. His is a born liar and a contemptible coward ... He in no way resembles the genial coloured gentleman of the Carolina cotton fields, or the pleasant Krooboy of the West Coast of Africa. To compare him with the lordly Zulu, the Basuto, or the common nondescript Kaffir ... would be ridiculous. The West Indian negro would be wiped out of Cape Colony in ten years. It is a great pity that he cannot be wiped out of the West Indies."

10. Alice Spinner is the pseudonym of Augusta Zelia Fraser, who was resident in Jamaica in the 1890s when her husband worked there as a civil servant, see Bryan (1991:199).

11. An example is Ada Quayle's *The Mistress* (1957). Chi-ju-ju, the Obeahman in this novel, is obviously included for local color.

12. See, for example, Turner (1982).

13. The heir to the tradition which is represented by the white missionaries, the Craigs, is Patou, their idiot son, who predeceases them. The black Afro-Christian tradition is disqualified when its representative, Herald Newton Day, is discovered in an act of bestiality. Revivalism, led either by whites or blacks, is shown to lead nowhere, and Wumba, the Obeahman, is exposed as a charlatan.

14. See Beckwith (1969), Hurston (1938), and Dunham (1946).

15. See, for example, Elkins (1977) and Last & Chavunduka (1986).

16. The circumstances are as follows: A little girl, Doris, becomes mysteriously ill, following a quarrel with another girl, Linda, with whom she has been playing. Mother Johnson advises against sending for a doctor and undertakes to heal Doris. When Doris dies under her treatment, Mother Johnson attempts to blame the death on Obeah set by Linda's parents and Brother Parkin and his wife.

17. The narrator observes: "These voodoo followers of the 'obeahman,' Ambrose, believed in the malevolent cruel spirits opposed to man. Theirs was a lost god of Africa, who, for their sins, had abandoned them" (1984:115). Ambrose, "an incarnation of the dark spirits," is opposed to the white man's god whom Prophet Moses attempts to reinterpret to meet his people's needs.

18. Rastafarians like Ras Dizzy and Ras Mortimer Planno were frequently on the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies in the 1960s and the 1970s. This period saw the rise of the yard theater and interaction between academics and communities in Greenwich Town and August Town, for example.

19. A third member of the trio controlling the spiritual dimension is Miss Gatha. Brodber, in effect, restores Salkey's Miss Gatha to the meeting-yard.

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KAGO BUKU: NOTES BY CAPTAIN KAGO FROM TABIKI,
TAPANAHONI RIVER, SURINAME, WRITTEN IN AFAKA
SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

The Afaka script is an indigenous syllabic script designed in the beginning of the twentieth century by Afaka, a Ndjuka from Benanu, Tapanahoni River, Suriname. Ndjuka is the only creole language in the world with its own script. It corresponds to a CV-language: each syllable consists either of a consonant followed by a vowel or of a vowel by itself.

The Ndjukas, one of the six Maroon peoples in Suriname, counts fourteen subgroups, the 'Los' (see Note 5). André Pakosie belongs to the Pinasi Lo, residing in the villages Loabi and Sanbendumi. Ndjukas are also divided into "Opu Nengee" and "Bilo Nengee," i.e. those who live upstream from the village Sangamansusa near Puketi and those living downstream from this village. The Opu Nengee consider themselves superior to the Bilo Nengee. Afaka was a Bilo Nengee, which explains that the "bukuman," i.e. the persons who knew and used the script, were for the greater part Bilo people. Father Morssink, a Catholic missionary working in the area, mentions the following Bilo villages along the Tapanahoni: Pulugudu, Tabiki, Benanu, Wanfinga, Nikii, Malobi, Fandaaki, Daai, Keementi, Saaie, Mpuusu, Poowi (Morssink 1931-33). These names occur frequently in the Kago papers.

About 1908, Afaka in a dream was charged by a white ghost to devise a script for his people. This he did, but he kept his invention to himself until 1910, when the appearance of Halley's comet was a sign for him to propagate it among his people. His brother-in-law Abena helped him with this task.

For this propagation the consent of Granman Amakti, the Chief of the Ndjukas, was needed. On his way to the Ndjuka capital Diitabiki, Afaka died (July 8, 1918). Abena took over his task. The script was a success: already in 1918 more than thirty *bukuman* knew and used it (Morssink 1918-19:94,143).

Various outsiders heard about the script. Father Morssink, the Chief-Forester J.W. Gonggryp, the merchant K. Ratelband, doctor C. Bonne of the Military Hospital in Paramaribo, the traveler Morton C. Kahn, the epigraphist Barry Fell, and the paleographers D. Diringer, I. Gelb, A. Klingenheben, and J. Friedrich, all showed their interest. Gonggryp drew the attention of C.N. Dubelaar of this article to the script in 1958; Pakosie learned it from the late Head of the Bukuman, Captain Alofaisi from Godo Olo. Independently Morssink and Gonggryp pleaded for the script's use with Granman Amakti; however, Amakti and the High Priest Kanape denied this request.

In 1974 Dubelaar visited the Tapanahony River to investigate the script. He met with several Ndjukas who knew and sometimes used it, among them Kago, Captain (Chief) of the village of Tabiki, Lower Tapanahoni. Kago, who died in that same year, permitted Dubelaar to photograph his collection of personal notes, etc. (his *buku*), written in the script. Judging from the contents these texts date for the greater part from the years 1920 to 1930. The collection contained four pieces of paper, the first one with text on both sides (numbered A-E), and fourteen texts written in a book which was meant for government officials stationed along the river to register goods transported into the interior (numbered 1-14). We have transcribed and translated these nineteen texts and added some explanatory notes. Captain Kago repeatedly uses the symbol *je*, meaning *jere*, i.e. "hear," "is not it," "you know." This interjection appears in the sign-by-sign transcription, but it is omitted in the normal Ndjuka transcription. Proper names are often preceded by the traditional forms of address "ba" and "da" before male names, "ma" and "sa" before female names. We have left these forms untranslated. Names of important ancestors who play a part in Maroon history are preceded by "*mi afo*" (i.e. my ancestor), even when the persons mentioned do not belong to the ancestors of the speaker. The *bukuman* have a formal *Edeman* (Head). After Afaka's death in 1918 his brother-in-law Abena became *Edeman*. He was succeeded by his son Alofaisi, Captain of Fisiti, a village upstream from Diitabiki. Alofaisi died February 28, 1993.

The *bukuman* memorize the Afaka symbols in a fixed order: *we*, *so*, *pu*, *fo*, etc. (Fig. 1). We also made a list in alphabetical order (Fig. 2). In most texts the bottom of a page is indicated by a wave. This was done because the symbols have a fixed form (though some variations occur) but not a fixed

position: in some cases they are turned 90 or 180 degrees. Vertical lines separate coherent groups of words; we did not succeed in finding out whether these strokes were put in systematically.

These Kago texts offer a wealth of material for the study of syllabic scripts in general. Historians, anthropologists, and linguists may find in the texts data on this Maroon society, some of which have not been available before. We consider the creation of an original syllabic script by Afaka an achievement of great importance which deserves to be elaborately recorded and documented.

For more details about the script and its history, and for the texts which have already been published we refer to the bibliography at the end of this article, in particular to Dubelaar & Pakosie (1988).¹

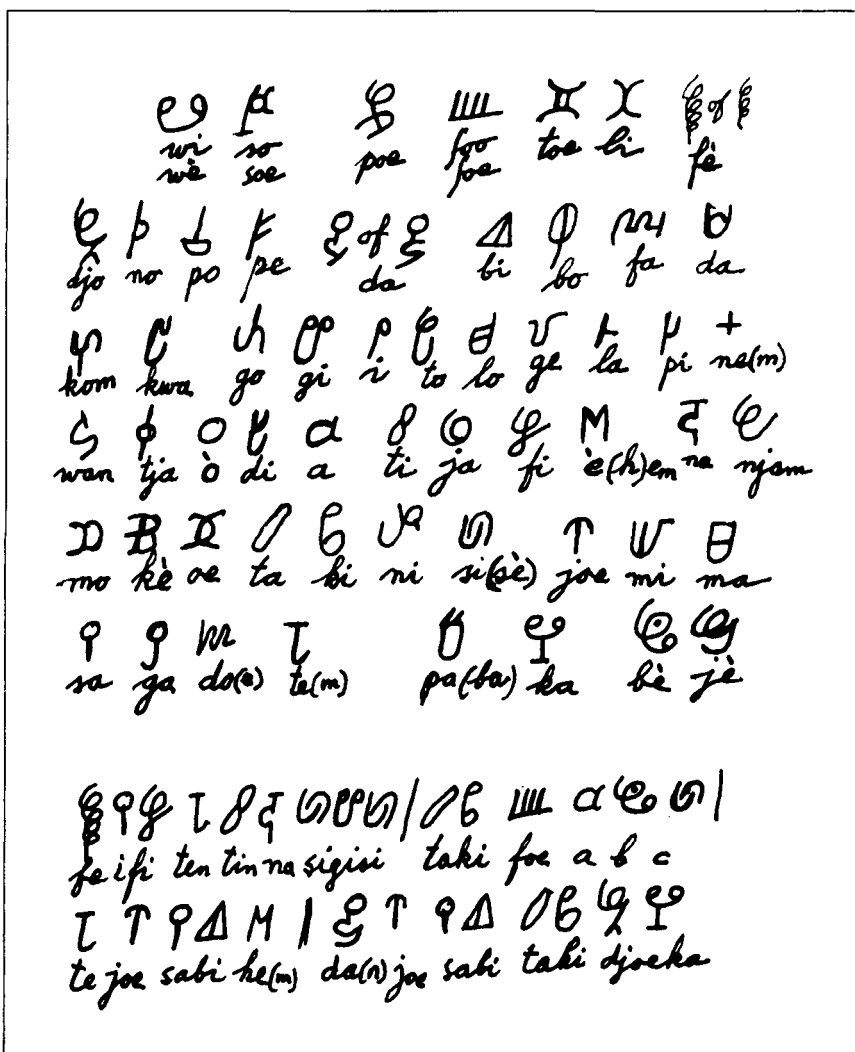


FIG. 1. THE LIST OF AFAKA SYMBOLS IN THE ORIGINAL ORDER.

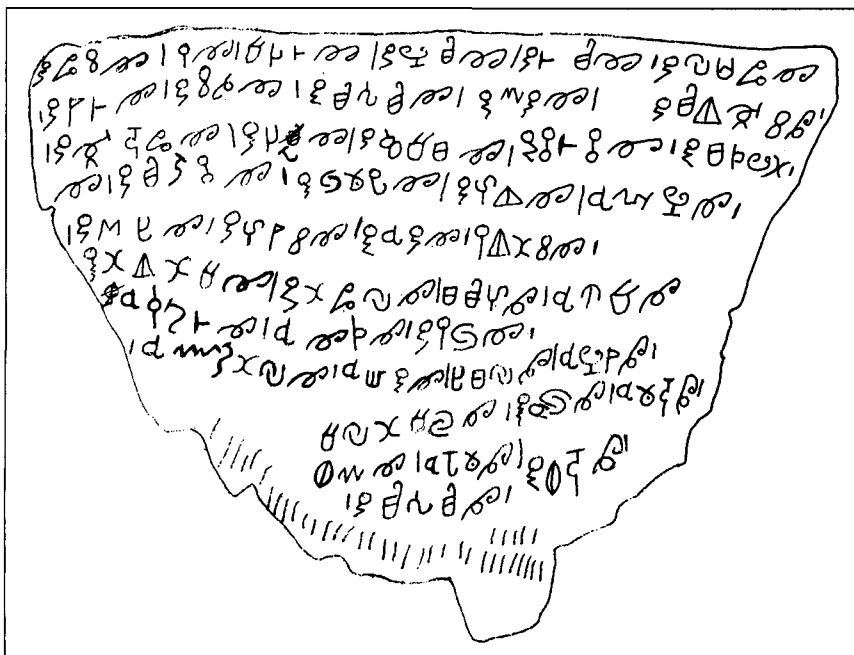
The two lines following the list of symbols run as follows: "Feifi tenti na sigisi taki foe a b c. Te ju sabi en da(n) ju sabi taki Ndjuka." Translation: "Fifty-six symbols of the A.B.C. When you know this, then you know [how to] speak Ndjuka." *Bukuman* who recite their A.B.C. usually add these lines. Apparently they do not strictly separate language and script in their minds.

The above Figure was copied by Father Morssink from papers which Afaka showed him.

	a	e	i	o	oe
	1 [a:]	2 [e]	3 [i:]	4 [ɔ]	5 [u]
b	6 [ba:]	7 [be]	8 [bi:]	9 [bo]	=9 [bu]
d	10 [da:]	11 [de]	12 [di:]	13 [do]	=13 [du]
dj				14 [djo]	=14 [dju]
f	15 [fa:]	16 [fe]	17 [fi:]	18 [fo]	=18 [fu]
g	19 [ga:]	20 [ge]	21 [gi:]	22 [go]	=22 [gu]
i	23 [ja:]	24 [je]			25 [ju]
k	26 [ka:]	27 [ke]	28 [ki:]	29 [ko]	=5 [ku]
kw	30 [kwa:]				
l=r	31 [la:]	32 [le]	=32 [li:]	33 [lo]	=33 [lu]
m	34 [ma:]	35 [me]	=35 [mi:]	36 [mo]	=36 [mu]
n	37 [na:]	38 [ne]	39 [ni:]	40 [no]	=40 [nu]
nj	41 [nja:]				
p	=6 [pa:]	42 [pe]	43 [pi:]	44 [po]	45 [pu]
s	46 [sa:]	47 [se]	=47 [si:]	48 [so]	=48 [su]
t	49 [ta:]	50 [te]	51 [ti:]	52 [to]	53 [tu]
tj	54 [tja:]				
w	55 [wa:]	56 [we]	=56 [wi:]		

FIG. 2. LIST OF THE AFAKA SYMBOLS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER (DUBELAAR & GONGGRYP 1968:243).

THE TEXTS (A-E, 1-14)



TEXT A. AN ENUMERATION OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGE OF SAAJE.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

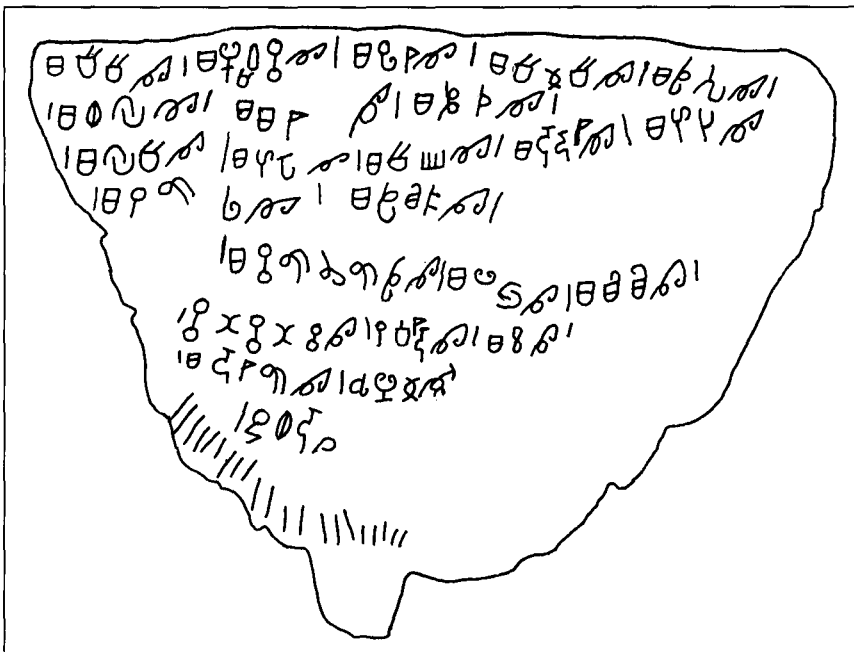
1. da gi ti je/ sa je pa pi la je/ da ka lo je/ da la lo je/ da si de gi je/
2. da ila je/ da ti to je/ da lo go lo je/ da du da je/ da lo bi so ti je/
3. da su na gi je/ da pi te je/ da to pa ma je/ da ki la ki je/ da ma nu we li
4. je/ da lo wa ki je/ da si be ga je/ da ko bi je/ a fa ka je/
5. da e di je/ da ko i ti je/ da a da je/ sa bi le ti je/
6. da le bi li ba je/ da le gi si je/ ma lo ko je/ a ju ba je/
7. a tja wa la je/ a je nu je/ da sa si je/
8. a du wa li si je/ a mi da je/ di ma si je/ a ka i je/
9. ba se li ba si je/ da mu se je/ a be na je/
10. bo do je/ a te be je/ da bo na je/
11. da logolo je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Da Giti/ Saaje pampila/ Da Kalo/ Da Lalo/ Da Sidegi/
2. Da Ila/ Da Tito/ Da Logolo/ Da Dunda/ Da Lobisoti/

3. Da Sunagi/ Da Piten/ Da Topaman/ Da Kilanki/ Da Manueli/
4. Da Lowaki/ Da Sibenga/ Da Kobi/ Afaka/
5. Da Edi/ Da Koiti/ Da Adan/ Sa Bileti/
6. Da Lebiliba/ Da Legiisi/ Maloko/ Ajuba/
7. Atjawala/ Ajenu/ Da Sasi/
8. Aduwalisi/ Amida/ Dimasi/ Akai/
9. Ba Selibasi/ Da Muse/ Abena/
10. Bodo/ Ateben/ Da Bona/
11. Da Logolo/

Apparently the writer started to mention a name (Da Giti), and then remembered that he had to mention the village name first. "Saaje pampila" means the paper (i.e. list) of Saaje. With two or three exceptions Text A mentions the names of male inhabitants. Text B (at the back of A) with one exception only mentions women. Furthermore, all names are current Ndjuka names, except Da Ila and Da Logolo. This Logolo appears twice in the list. It is possible that two individuals with that name lived in Saaje; however, this is not very probable in such a small community. Maybe the writer made a mistake. Finally, Afaka and his brother-in-law Abena are mentioned in this Saaje list. From various other sources (e.g. Morssink 1918-19) we know that Afaka came from the village of Benanu. Legiisi was an *Obeahman* from Saaje.



TEXT B. CONTINUATION OF THE SAAJE LIST IN TEXT A.

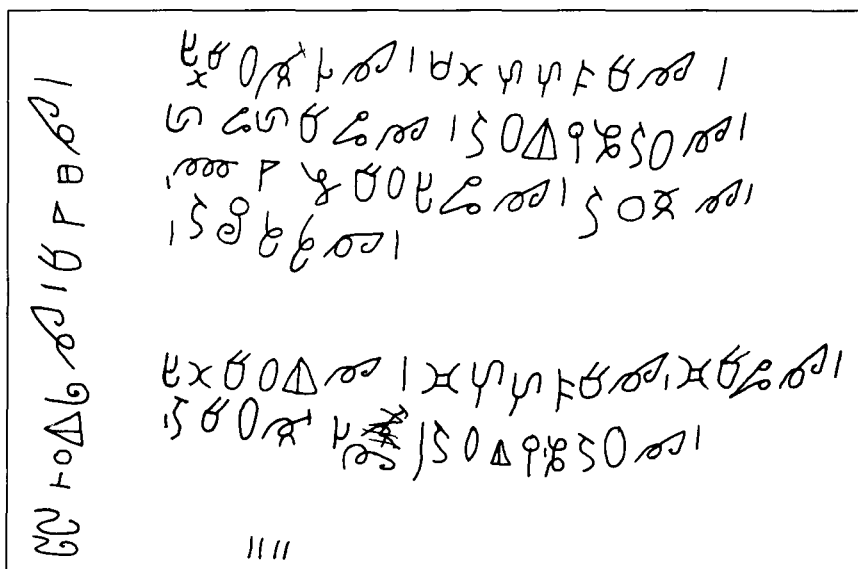
Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. ma ba ba je/ ma ka ba ta ki je/ ma ga i je/ ma ba ku ba je/ ma to go je/
2. ma bo si je/ ma ma i je/ ma ke nu je/
3. ma si ba je/ ma ko te je/ ma ba fu je/ ma na na i je/ ma ko pi je/
4. ma sa ni ja je/ ma tu lu pe je/
5. ma ki ni nja ni to je/ ma we si je/ ma lo lo je/
6. ki li ki li ki je/ sa po i na je/ ma ti je/
7. ma na i ni je/ a ka u su/
8. da bona?

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Ma Bamba/ Ma Kabataki/ Ma Gai/ Ma Bakuba/ Ma Tongo/
2. Ma Bosi/ Ma Mai/ Ma Kenu/
3. Ma Siiba/ Ma Konte/ Ma Baafu/ Ma Nanai/ Ma Kopi/
4. Ma Sanija/ Ma Tuludi/
5. Ma Kininjanito/ Ma Wense/ Ma Lolo/
6. Kilikiliki/ Sa Poina/ Ma Ti/
7. Ma Naini/ Akausu/
8. Da Bona?

All names are current names for women, except Kininjanito and Kilikiliki. Tulupe probably is a slip of the pen for Tuludi. The only male name at the end has already been mentioned in Text A. Second, the rudimentary figure after Da Bona is not a current symbol. Third, Text 8 also deals with Saaje.



TEXT C. PAYMENTS OR DEBTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE "KWAKWALA OBEAH."²

Sign-by-sign transcription:

Vertical line to the left:

kwa kwa la o bi ja je/ pa i ma je/

Other lines:

1. di li ba ta so pi je/ de li ko ko pe ba je/
2. si gi si pa gi je/ wa ta bi sa ke wa ta je/
3. fe i fi ba ta di gi je/ wa o u je/
4. wa ga nja nja je/
5. di li ba ta bi je/ tu ko ko pe ba je/ tu pa gi je/
6. wa ba ta so pi je/ wa ta bi sa ke wa ta je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

Vertical line: Kwakwala obija paiman

Other lines:

1. dii bataa sopi/ dii koko pemba/
2. sigisi pangi/ wan dabisan ken wataa/
3. feifi bataa diingi / wan how/
4. wan gaan njanjan/
5. dii bataa bii/ tu koko pemba/ tu pangi/
6. wan bataa sopi/ wan dabisan³ ken wataa/

English:

Vertical line: payments for kwakwale obeah

1. three bottles of rum/ three balls of pemba⁴/
2. six waistcloths/ one jar of cane juice/
3. five bottles of drink/ one cutlass/
4. one big portion of food/
5. three bottles of beer/ two balls of pemba/ two waistcloths/
6. one bottle of rum/ one jar of cane juice/

|||||
 1d9 M w d Ɔ w 1 6 Ɔ x ʎ ʎ 9 8 6 6 1
 6 0 8 1 6 ʎ 6 6 6 1

1 6 6 1 w d 6 w 6 6 6 1 5 x 8 6 6 1

0 5 ʎ 5 6 6 1 5 x 8 6 6 1 x ʎ 5 x

8 6 6 1 5 6 6 6 1 ʎ w 1 5 6 6 1 5 x

8 6 6 1 6 6 1

6 6 6 1 d ʎ ʎ w 1 ʎ 6 6 1 |||||
 ~~~~~

TEXT D. PAYMENTS OR GIFTS CONNECTED WITH THE SPIRIT AKANFU.

## Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. a ga du fu a ka fu / de ka li go go sa ma ba gi je/
2. ba ta u/ gi tu pa gi je/
3. to so/ fu a gi mi ba ka je/ wa li ti so pi/
4. bu wa i/ wa pa gi/ wa li ti so pi je/ li li wa li
5. ti so pi/ wa pa gi je/ su de/ wa pa gi/ wa li
6. ti so pi je/
7. we gi we gi/a ko i mi/go to lo/

## Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. A Gadu fu Akanfu/ den kali Gongosamanbangi/
2. Baa Tau/ gi tu pangi/
3. Toso/ fu Agimibaka/ wan liti sopi/
4. Bunwai/ wan pangi/ wan liti sopi/ Lili wan li-
5. ti sopi/ wan pangi/ Suden/ wan pangi/ wan li-
6. ti sopi/
7. Wengiwengi/ Akoimi/ Godo Olo/

## English:

1. The God (Spirit) of Akanfu/ they call Gongosamanbangi/
2. Ba Tau/ gave two waistcloths/
3. Toso/ of Agimibaka/ one liter of rum/
4. Bunwai/ one waistcloth/ one liter of rum/ Lili one li-
5. ter of rum/ one waistcloth/ Suden one waistcloth/ one li-
6. ter of rum/
7. Wengiwengi/Akoimi/Godo Olo/

The text opens with a statement that the God (*Winti*) speaking through the medium Akanfu is called Gongosamanbangi. Gongosaman means tattler. The spirit punishes informers. Lines 2-6 mention gifts from Ba Tau, Toso, Bunwai, Lili and Suden (to Gongosamanbangi?).



English:

1. in a wooden barrel/ you must put it/
2. koati/ pijepijepau/ malembelembe/ sour herb/ mope herb/ agumaga-maka/
3. singafu, young, / Kunopu herb/ cotton herb/ white cotton/red cotton put it all [into the barrel]/
4. one bottle of beer open it throw [it] into [the barrel]/ you must leave half [of it in the bottle]/ to wash it
5. then you pull three pieces of singafu root/ then you pound it/then you take the juice of it/ to drink it/
6. with the koati herb/

This is a recipe for a purification herb bath. Herb baths are frequently used in Afro-Suriname societies to cure diseases. The above herb names are well-known among the Ndjukas. "*Lokuwan*" should be *jonkuu* wan (younger one).



Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. pe gu du je/ ko de/ le bi mo u su/ ne ge je
2. /mi a fo pe gi/ fu pa ma ni si be je/
3. /pe gu du/ de ka li/ we lo ne ge je/
4. da ni ke/ da ne si/ da la gu/
5. a lo ka/ di ki si/ sa ma na/ de ka li / o ka/
6. /mi a fo pe gi/ fu pe gu du je/
7. /da kwa mi

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

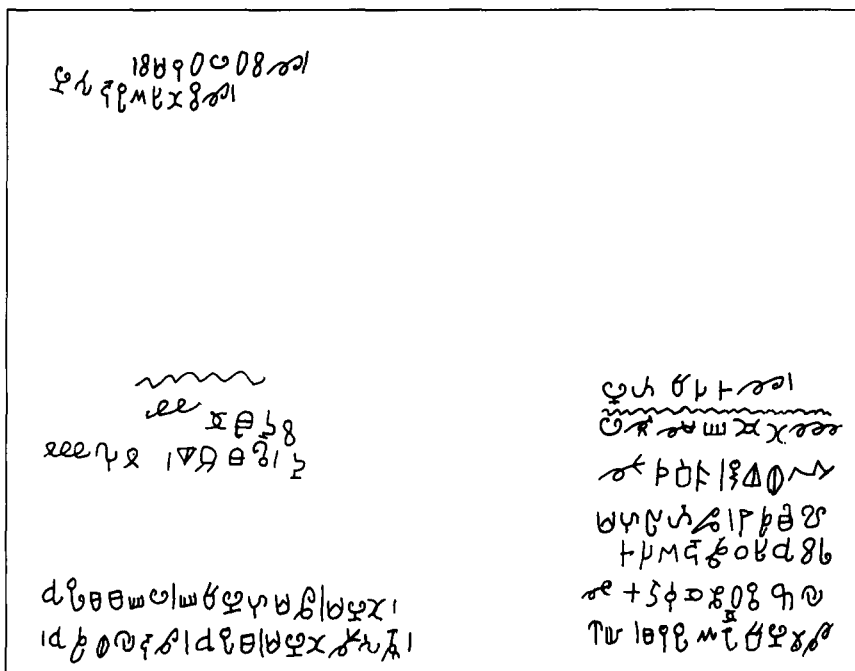
1. Peigudu/ kondee/ lebi musu/ nengee
2. /mi afo Pengi/ fu Pamanisi bee/
3. /Peigudu/ den kali/ we lo nengee/
4. Da Nike/ Da Nesi/ Da Langu/
5. Aloka/ Dikisi/ Samaana/ den kali Okan/
6. /mi afo Pengi fu Peigudu/
7. /Da Kwami

English:

1. Purugudu Village/ Red Cap Negroes
2. /Ancestor Pengi/ of the Pamanisi bere/
3. /Purugudu [people] are called run away negroes/
4. Da Nike/ Da Nesi/ Da Langu/
5. Aloka/ Dikisi/ Samaana/ are called Aucans/
6. /Ancestor Pengi/ from Purugudu/
7. /Da Kwami

The village of Purugudu at the confluence of the Marowijne and Tapanahony Rivers is called Peigudu by the Ndjukas. Second, "Red Cap negroes" descend from black soldiers in the service of the Suriname Government in the beginning of the nineteenth century, who wore red caps. "Lebi Musu" is the name of the Purugudu Lo. A "bee" or "bere" (line 2) is a matrilineage within a lo. In line 5 the Okan(isi) or Aucans is another name for Ndjukas (Dutch: *Aukaners*).

The ancestor in line 6 is not an ancestor of the writer but rather a collective ancestor of the Ndjukas (see Introduction). The fact that the name Da Kwami is placed at the end of the page might mean that this man was from Purugudu but did not belong to the Lebi Musu Lo. As lo names frequently appear in these texts we list the various los of the Ndjuka.<sup>5</sup>



TEXT 2. SOME NOTES AND THE LIST OF SYMBOLS.

Lower right.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. Ka go pa pi la je/
2. we so pu fo tu li fe
3. djo no po pe/ da bi bo fa
4. de ko kwa go gi/ i to lo ge
5. la pi en na nja o di a ti ja
6. fi ne wan tja mo ke un ta ki ni se
7. ju mi/ ma sa ga do te pa ka be je

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Kago pampila/
- 2-7. The Afaka symbols according to Kago.

English:

1. Kago's list of symbols.

There exist three evident differences between Kago and Morssink concerning the shape of the symbols: the signs for "nja," "fi," and "ke." There also exist some differences in the order of the symbols between the lists of Kago and Morssink.

Lower left.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. a ga ma ma fu wi/ fu ba ka ko de je/ de ka li/
2. /a to bo si na je/ a ga ma/ de ka li dju gu su/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. A gaanm'ma fu wi/ fu baka kondee/ den kali/
2. Atobosina/ a gaanm'ma/ den kali Djugusu/

English:

1. Our grandmother/ from the back part of the village/ is called/
2. Atobosina/ the grandmother/ is called Djugusu/

It is not clear whether this line deals with one grandmother or with two different ones.

Top left.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. /ti de sa ta wi ta ki je/
2. ka go na ga en di li ki je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. /tide sataa wi taki/
2. Kago nanga Endiliki<sup>6</sup>/

English:

1. Today [is] Saturday; we have been talking/
2. Kago and Hendrik/

Left, upside down.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. na/ga ma ba bi / be go fe
2. ti na lu ku je

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

- 1-2. Na Gaanman Bambi ben go feti na Aluku

English:

- 1-2. It is Granman Bambi<sup>7</sup> who has been fighting against the Alukus.

This page is complicated as the four texts do not seem to cohere. The illustration shows three other lines which are too vague to be deciphered. Besides, some writing in Latin script occurs which was apparently done by the officials who originally used the book (see Introduction).



10 ልዩ ስራ ላይ ተገኝተዋል

ገዢው ስራውን ለማግኘት ለሚገባው  
ሰዓት ስራውን ለማግኘት

ገዢው ስራውን ለማግኘት ለሚገባው  
ሰዓት ስራውን ለማግኘት ለሚገባው  
ሰዓት ስራውን ለማግኘት ለሚገባው  
ሰዓት ስራውን ለማግኘት ለሚገባው

ገዢው ስራውን ለማግኘት ለሚገባው

Upper part.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. /ta bi ki ko de je/ ma sa pe di ne ge je/
2. /a nja we fu ta bi ki je/ na wa ga tja li na nja we ko na ta bi ki je
3. mi ga da wa de fu ta bi ki je/ pe di/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. /Tabiki kondee/ Masaa Pedi nengee<sup>8</sup>/
2. /Anjawe fu Tabiki/ na wan gaan [wan] tjali na [A]njawe kon na Tabiki<sup>9</sup>
3. mi gaanda Wande fu Tabiki je<sup>10</sup>/ Pedi/

English:

1. /Tabiki Village/ Master Pedi Negroes [the Lo]/
2. /Anjawe from Tabiki/ It was an ancestor [who] brought Anjawe to Tabiki
3. /Grandfather Wande from Tabiki/ Pedi [lo]/

Rest of the page (under the wave).

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. a sa ma de fu ta bi ki/ pe di ne ge/ [?] bo/ be i ne ge
2. tja li je/ de ka li/ en bu ku su je/ na fo to je/ e
3. de/ [?] de ka li [?] mi na je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Asamade fu Tabiki/ Pedi Nengee/ [?] nengee
2. tjali/ den kali/ en Bukusu/ na foto/ e
3. de/ [?] den kali [?] mina/

English:

1. Asamade from Tabiki/ (he is a) Pedi Negro [?] negro
2. carry/ they call him Bukusu/ in town/ [?]
3. [?/ ?] they call/

The illustration shows this part of the text inadequately, therefore we could not transcribe the symbols completely and the translation is fragmentary.



Upper part (one line).

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. /be na nu/ ko de je/ ma sa la di ka ne ge je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Benanu kondee/ Masa Dikan Nengee/

English:

1. Benanu Village/ Negroes from the Dikan Lo [the lo of Mr. Dikan]/

Lower part (under the wave).

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. /da ko so u ma de ka li/ ma a ko lu je
2. /mi a fo/ pa ma la go/ ga da o ke i/ ma ma je/
3. /mi a fo pe le se si/ da a de u du be je/
4. /mi a fo tu tu wa fu ni ki/ da ko so be je/
5. /mi ga da la bi/ di ka ne ge je/ da de u du be
6. je/

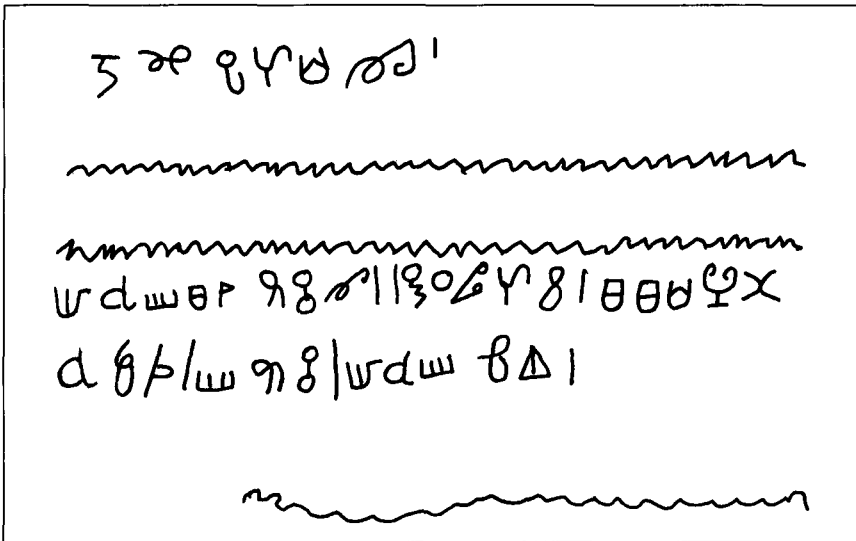
Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. /Da Koson uma den kali/ Ma Akoolu<sup>11</sup>
2. /mi afo Pamalango/ gaanda Okei<sup>12</sup>/ mama/
3. /mi afo Pelensesi/ Da Ade-udu bee/
4. /mi afo Tutuwa fu Nikii/ Da Koso bee/
5. /mi gaanda Labi/ Dikan Nengee/ Da Adee-udu bee/

English:

1. /The wife of Da Koson they call Ma Akoolu
2. /Ancestor Pamalango/ is the mother of Great-Grandfather Okei/
3. /Ancestor Pelensesi [Princess] is from the Da Adee-udu bere/
4. /Ancestor Tutuwa from Nikii/ from the Da Koso bere/
5. /Grandfather Labi/ is a Dikan Negro/ from the Da Adee-udu bere/

In this paragraph Kago wrote down part of the oral tradition of the Lo.



TEXT 5. WAN FINGA KONDEE.

## Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. wan fi ga ko de je/
2. mi a fo ma i ni ki je/ da o gi ko ti/ ma ma de ka li/
3. a to no/ fu ni ki/ mi a fo to bi/

## Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Wan Finga kondee/
2. mi afo Mai Niki/ Da Ogii-koti/ mama den kali/
3. Antono/ fu Nikii/ mi afo Tobi/

## English:

1. Wan Finga Village/
2. Ancestor Mai Niki/ Da Ogri-koti's mother they call/
3. Antono/ from Nikii/ Ancestor Tobi/

TEXT 6. MALOBI KONDEE.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. /ja fu a wa ta wa je/ ba ka ko de ga ma ma je/
2. ma lo bi ko de je/ ma sa la be i ne ge je/
3. da ta fu de de na fo de o ko je/
4. a la san di de na pa pi la ja je/ na fu ma lo bi je e ta ki je/
5. mi ga da pi ma/ ne tja li be i ne ge lo we je
6. mi ga da pi ma je/ e de ma je/ ga da a dju bi je e de ma
7. mi ga da so bo wa/ ne be pa ti gu du je/ da fa gi mi di ko de
8. mi ga da pe ki/ fu bu go su la ga ba si ja je/ ne a ga da
9. /ma ta wa fu ba ka ko de je/
10. so bo wa e pa ti gu du je // da fa li je ba ka ko de
11. sa pa ke ga ma ma de ka li ma fu a ta wa je/ sa ma so je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. [ʔ]/ baka kondee gaàn m'ma/
2. Malobi kondee je/ Masaa Beei Nengee/
3. Da Tanfu dede na fodewooko/
4. ala sani di de na pampila ja[ʔ]/ na fu Malobi en taki/
5. mi gaanda Piima/ neen tjali Beei Nengee lowe

6. mi gaanda Piima/ edeman/ gaanda Adjubi edeman
7. mi gaanda Sobowa/ neen ben paati gudu / Da Fangi mindi kondee
8. mi gaanda Penki/ fu Bungusula gaan Basija<sup>13</sup>/ neen anga Da
9. /Matawa fu baka kondee/
10. Sobowa en paati gudu/ /Da Fali baka kondee
11. Sanpake gaan mama den kali Ma Fuatawa/ Sa Mason/

English:

1. [?]/ Grandmothers from the back part of the village/
2. of Malobi / [are] Bei Negroes [belonging to the lo of Mr. Bley]/
3. Da Tanfu died on Thursday/
4. All things which are in this paper/ deal with Malobi Village, their story/
5. Grandfather Piima/ he led the Beei Negroes when they ran away
6. Grandfather Piima/ Chief/ Grandfather Adjubi Chief
7. Grandfather Sobowa/ he distributed the goods (rations)/ Da Fangi of the middle village
8. Grandfather Penki/ from Bungusula (was) Grand Basija/ he with (together with) Da
9. /Matawa from the back part of the village/
10. Sobowa he distributed the goods/ /Da Fali back part of the village
11. The grandmother of Sanpake they call Ma Fuatawa/ Sa Mason/

This part deals with the history of the Beei Lo. The leaders of the "lowe ten" (run-away time) and their functions are mentioned.

Left page, second part (under the wave).

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. da djo go/ fu fa da ki je/ en da/ so ba je
2. mi a fo na no si/ ne na ga ma ma je/ lo we ma/
3. da ku su we fu fa da ki pa si je/
4. mi ga da ku wan gi fu fa da ki pa si je/ a be li bi a
5. ga ma ga u la/ nen a po ti sa ni gi den je/ pa pa
6. ga du fu ki de je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Da Djogo/ fu Fandaaki [pasi]<sup>14</sup>/ en da Sonba
2. mi afo Nanosi/ ne na gaanmama/ lowe ma/
3. Da Kusuwe fu Fandaaki pasi/
4. mi gaanda Kuwagi<sup>15</sup> fu Fandaaki pasi/ a ben libi nan-
5. ga Ma Gaula/ nen a poti sani gi den/ pa-
6. pagadu fu kii den/

English:

1. Da Djogo/ from the road to Fandaaki his father [was] Sonba

2. Ancestor Nanosi/ is the tribe's mother, she ran away [from the plantation]/
3. Da Kusuwe from Fandaaki road/
4. Grandfather Kuwangi from Fandaaki road/ he lived with
5. grandmother Gaula/ then he put things for them/ Pa-
6. pagudu to kill them/

Right page, first part.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. da djo go da da de ka li da djo pu fu bu gu su la
2. a fo se si ja / ma to o to je/
3. mi a fo nja ke pi je/ fu ma to o to je/
4. ma ga u la je/ mi di ko de je/ mi a fo ke ke/ mi
5. di ko de je mi a fo da ba/ fu mi di ko de je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Da Djogo dada den kali Da Djopu fu Bungusula
2. afo Sensija/ Ma Tooto/
3. mi afo Njankepi fu Ma Tooto/
4. Ma Gaula/ Mindi Kondee/ mi afo Keeke/ Min-
5. di Kondee mi afo Daba/ fu Mindi Kondee/

English:

1. Da Djogo's father they call Da Djopu from Bungusula
2. Ancestor Sensija/ Ma Tooto/
3. Ancestor Njankepi from Ma Tooto/
4. Ma Gaula/ (from) Middle Village/ Ancestor Keke/ (from) Mid-
5. dle Village Ancestor Daba/ from Middle Village/

Right page, second part (under the wave).

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. ma ne ge je/ fu bu gu su la je/
2. ga da a djo pu/ ne de be wi pi je/ ga ma be wi pi en/
3. fu di a tja li pa ma ka nen e kon na dju ka je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Man nengee/ fu Bungusula/
2. Gaanda Adjopu/ neen den ben wipi en/ gaanman ben wipi en/
3. fu di a tjali Paamaka nengee kon na Ndjuka/

English:

1. A man from Bungusula/
2. Grandfather Adjopu/ they had whipped him/ the Granman had whipped him/
3. because he had brought the Paramaka Maroons to Ndjuka country/



Right page, third part (under the second wave).

Sign-by-sign transcription:

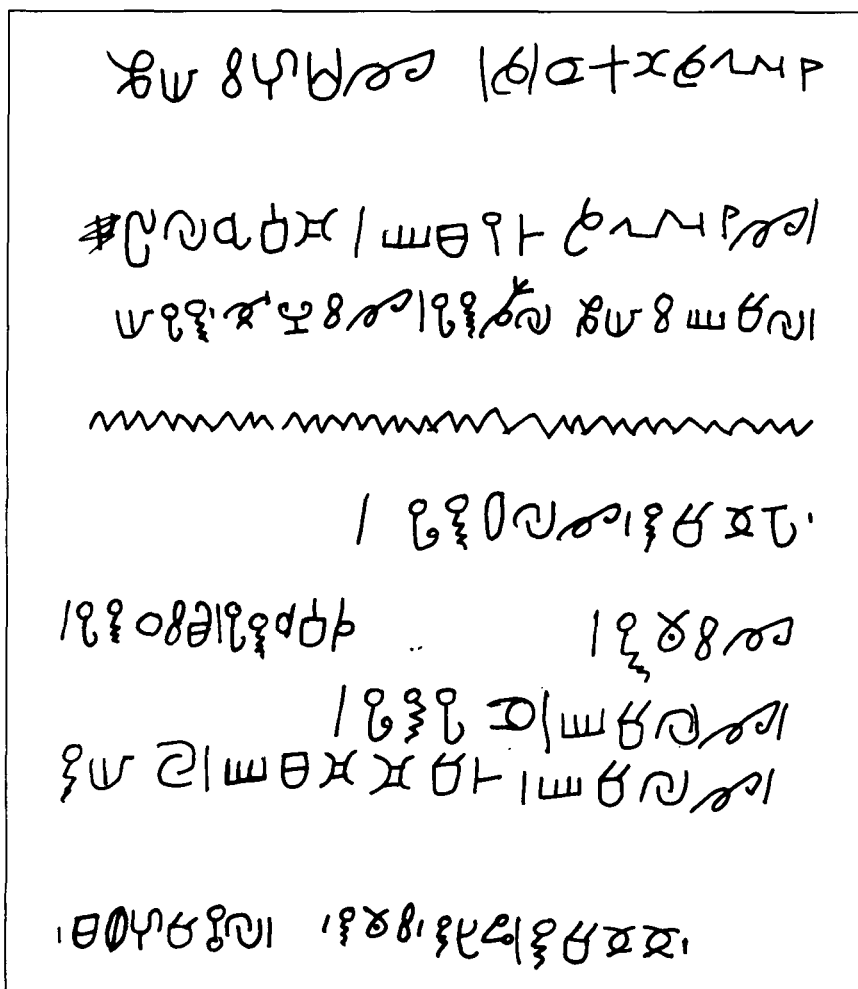
1. na u ma nen de ja je/ bu gu su la je/ ma ku ja ku/
2. ma ke ja/ a fo sa ga ma ma je/ go do lo en ko de

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. na uman nen de dja/ Bungusula/ Ma Kujaku/
2. ma Keja/ afo San gaanm'ma/ Godo Olo<sup>16</sup> en kondee

English:

1. Women's names are here/ (from) Bungusula/ Ma Kujaku/
2. Ma Keja/ grandmother San/ Godo Olo [was] her village



TEXT 7. KEEMENTI KONDEE.

## Sign-by-sign transcription:

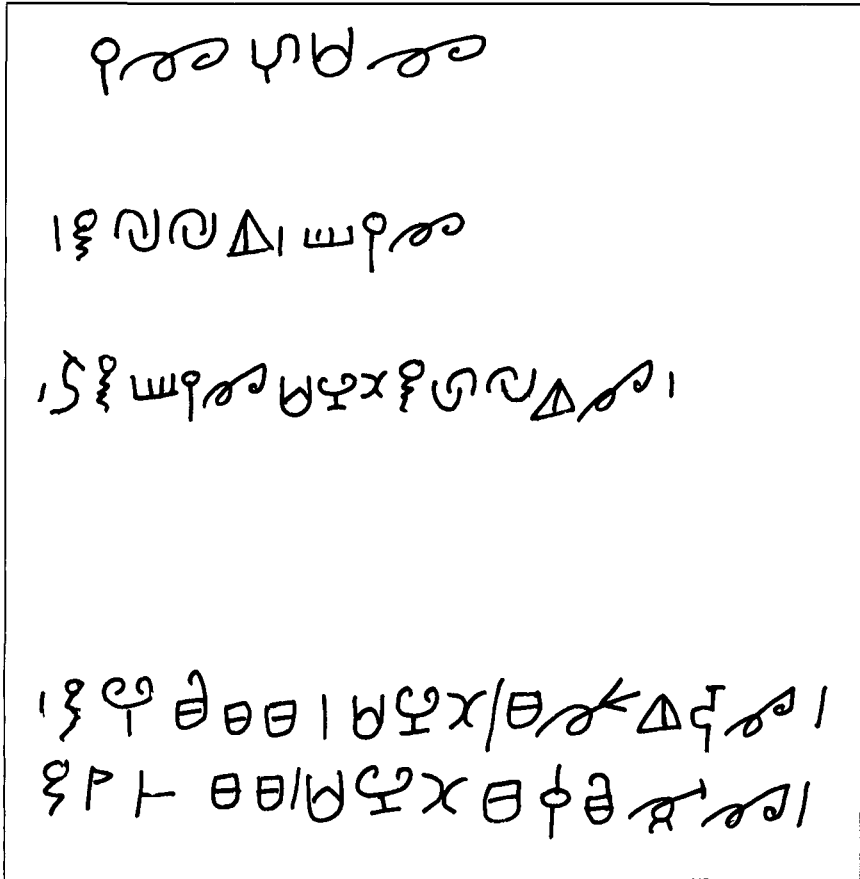
1. ke me ti ko de je/ nja/ mu ne li nja fa i
2. kwa si a po tu/ fu ma sa la nja fa i je/
3. mi ga da su ka ti je/ ga da djo si/ ke me ti/ fu pa si/
4. ga da ta si je/ da pa ku te/
5. ga da o ti lo/ ga da a po no/ da be ti je/
6. ga da ga mu/ fu pa si je/
7. da mi si/ fu ma tu tu ba la/ fu pa si je/
8. ma bo ko pa ki si/ da be ti/ da di gi/ da pa ku ku/

## Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Keementi kondee/ muneli Njanfai
2. Kwasi Apontu/ fu masaa Njanfai/
3. mi gaanda Sukaati/ gaanda Djosi/ Keementi<sup>17</sup>/ fu pasi<sup>18</sup>/
4. gaanda Tasi/ Da Pakuten/
5. gaanda Otilon/ gaanda Anpono/ da Benti/
6. gaanda (A)gaamu/ fu pasi/
7. da Mesi/ fu ma Tutubala fu pasi/
8. ma Bokobakisi/ da Beti/ da Digi/ da Pankuku<sup>19</sup>/

## English:

1. Keementi Village/ Master Njanfai
2. Kwasi Apontu/ from Master Njanfai/
3. Grandfather Sukaati/ Grandfather Djosi/ Keementi/ from the path/
4. Grandfather Tasi/ Da Pakuten/
5. Grandfather Otilon/ Grandfather Anpono/ Da Benti/
6. Grandfather Agaamu/ from the path/
7. Da Mesi/ from Ma Tutubala from the path/
8. Ma Bokobakisi/ Da Beti/ Da Digi/ Da Pankuku/



TEXT 8. SAAJE KONDEE.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. Sa je ko de je/
2. /da si si bi/ fu sa je
3. wan da fu sa je de ka li da si si bi je/
4. da ka lo ma ma/ de ka li/ ma djo bi na je/
5. da i la ma ma/ de ka li ma tja lu su je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Saaje kondee/
2. / Da Sisibi/ fu Saaje
3. wan da fu Saaje den kali Da Sisibi/
4. Da Kalo m'ma den kali Ma Djobina/
5. Da Ila m'ma/ den kali Ma Djalusu/

English:

1. Saaje Village/
2. /Da Sisibi from Saaje
3. One da from Saaje they call Da Sisibi/
4. Da Kalo's mother/ they call/ Ma Djobina/
5. Da Ila's mother/ they call Ma Djalusu/

This text appears to be a supplement of Texts A and B. The names Da Kalo and Da Ila also appear in Text A.

ᱠᱟᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ

ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ  
ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ

ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ  
ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ

ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ  
ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ  
ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ

ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ  
ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ  
ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ ᱠᱚᱢᱟᱨᱟᱝᱜᱟᱴᱟᱝ

TEXT 9. MPUUSU KONDEE.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. mo pu su ko de je/
2. ga da a pa na ki/ a ga ma ma fu mo pu su je
3. de ka li mi a fo a na ku je/
4. mi ga da si to/ mo pu su/ di ba ka/ gi pa pi la

5. fu fi a ga dju ka ne ge/ na ki sa i de go po ko
6. a pa pi la je/ tu wa lo fu e de ma/ a ga ga ma
7. je/ a la sa ma ta ki a mu lu ku bu bu je/ a ki na
8. fu fi/ ba ka ta ki na fu fi je// ne de la
9. fu/ /na ku pa i ne bo ko a pa pi la je/
10. ma na na i je/ ne be tja si ki fi ti ki je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

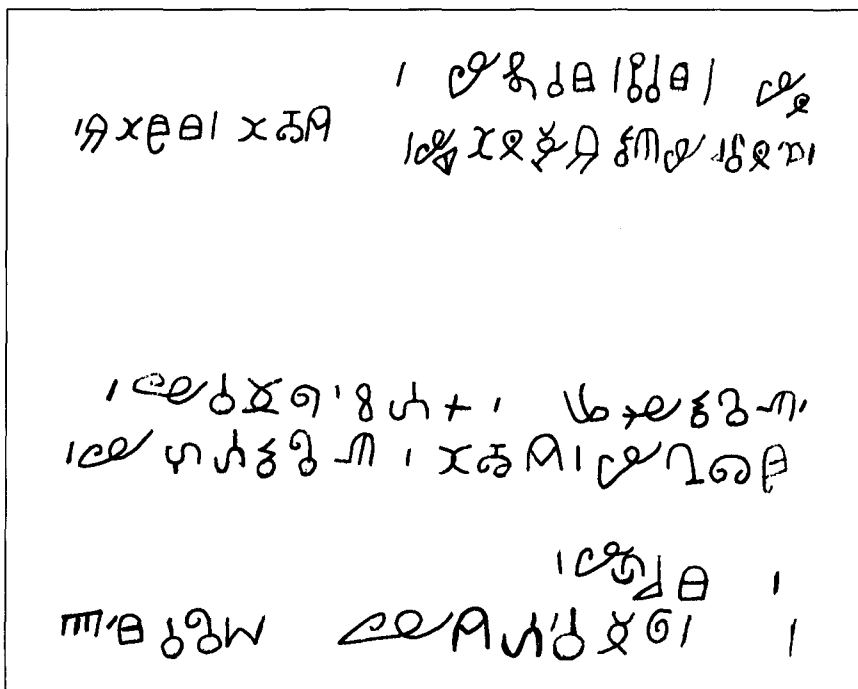
1. Mpuusu kondee/
2. Gaanda Apanaki/ a gaanm'ma fu Mpuusu
3. den kali mi afo Anaku/
4. mi gaanda (Ba)siton/ Mpuusu di bakaa/ gi pampila
5. fu fii nanga Ndjuka Nengee/ na Kisai den go booko
6. a pampila/ tuwalufu edeman/ anga Gaanman
7. ala sama taki a mu luku bun bun/ a kina
8. fu fii/ bakaa taki na fu fii/ nen den la-
9. fu/ /na Kunpai neen booko a pampila/
10. Ma Nanai<sup>20</sup>/ neen ben tja sikiifi tiki/

English:

1. Mpuusu Village/
2. Grandfather Apanaki/ the grandmother of Mpuusu
3. they call ancestor Anaku/
4. Grandfather Basiton [from] Mpuusu to whom the white men gave paper [a letter]
5. for peace with the Ndjuka Negroes/ At Kisai [village] they went to break [to read]
6. the letter/ twelve chiefs with the Granman
7. all the people say he must look very carefully/ the prohibition
8. about the peace[?]/ white people say it is for peace/ then they
9. laughed/ /it was a Kumpai Negro who broke the letter/
10. Ma Nanai/ brought a writing stick [a lead pencil]/

This text relates how the white men from Paramaribo sent a letter with a peace proposal to the Ndjukas. They gave it to Basiton, the Chief of the Kumpai Lo, who could read and write. He played an important part in the peace negotiations. At Kisai the letter was opened and read in the presence of the Granman and twelve chiefs. Everybody warned Basiton to read carefully (as white people cannot be trusted). We do not know what "prohibition about the peace" means. In lines 4-5 it says that the letter offering peace was opened at Kisai (Tapanahony River). This cannot be right. The

peace treaty with the Ndjukas was signed in 1760 at Sitonkiiki. At that time the Ndjukas had not yet moved from the Upper Marowijne area (Ndjuka Creek) to the Tapanahony River. This happened around 1790.



TEXT 10. JAUSA KONDEE.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. Ja u sa ko de je/ e ga sa ma fu
2. ma i si je/
3. lo we te je/ de ka li/ mi ga da ko go je/
4. mi ga da djo ni/ ne koti/ ja u sa je/
5. a be ga i je mi da pa su be li bi je/ de ka li/ ma lo li ba/
6. be je/ ma sa ki/ ma sa fi je/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Jausa kondee/ en gaan suma fu
2. Mainsi/
3. lowe ten/ den kali/ mi gaanda Kongo/
4. mi gaanda Djoni/ neen koti Jausa/
5. [?] ben libi je/ den kali / Ma Loliba/
6. [?] /Ma Sanki/ Ma Safi je/

We could not translate parts of this text; therefore we leave out the translation in English. Djoni is probably Antioni, the founder of the village of Yausa.





## Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. di li ta bi ki je/ ga ma de de na fo de o ko je/
2. ga ma a ma to / de ka li e li bi a na tu je/
3. ga ma o se i si je/ ga ma a ma ki ti / ga ma a ma to
4. tja/ ga ma ko tu
5. da saka ma ma de ka li mi a fo ta ja je/
6. mi a fo / gi ba/ o to ne ge je/
7. /ne so li/ da sa ka/ da o bi ja so je/ a ga ga do o
8. bi ja so je/
9. ga ma o se i si/ en da de ka li la ba i je/
10. a bi li ma ma je/ de ka li ma le ki je/

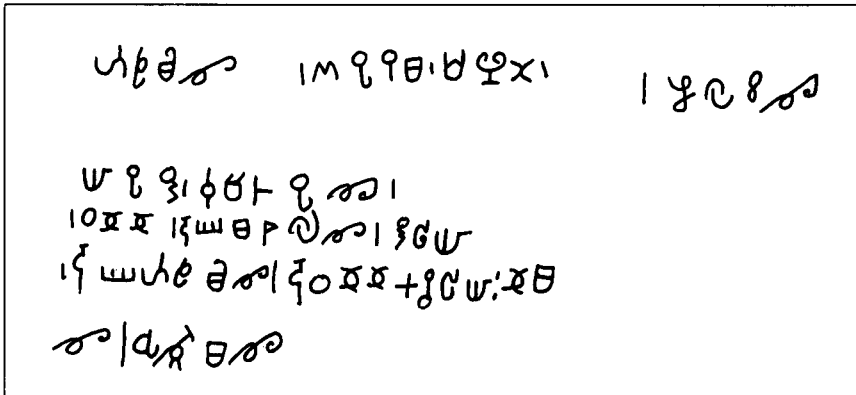
## Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Diitabiki/ gaanman dede na fo de wooko/
2. Gaanman Amato(dja)/ den kali en libi ana tu/
3. Gaanman Oseise/ Gaanman Amakiti/ Gaanman Amato-
4. dja/ Gaanman Kontu
5. Da Saka m'ma den kali mi afo Taaja/
6. Mi afo Djemba [Giba is an error]/ [is an] Otoo nengee/
7. /neen soli/ Da Saka/ da obija so/ a Gaan Gado o-
8. bija so/
9. Gaanman Oseise/ en da den kali Labai/
10. Abili m'ma/ den kali Ma Lenki/

## English:

1. Diitabiki Village. The Granman died on Thursday/
2. Granman Amatodja, they call him also Living Hand/
3. Granman Oseisi/ Granman Amakti/ Granman Amato-
4. dja/ Granman Kontu
5. Da Saka's mother they call ancestor Taaja/
6. Ancestor Djemba is an Otoo negro [from the Otoo Lo]/
7. /she showed [taught]/ Da Saka/ the obia cult/ the Gran Gado o-
8. beah cult/
9. Granman Oseisi/ his father they called Labai/
10. Abili's mother/ they called Ma Lenki/

The names of the various Granmans (chiefs of the Ndjukas) are well-known in the history of the Maroons. Granman Amakti refused to give his consent for the propagation of the Afaka script since Christian churches used it to propagate Christianity.



TEXT 12. GODO OLO.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. go to lo je / en ga sa ma / de ka li/
2. mi ga da / tja pa la ga je/
3. /o ku ku/ na fu ma i si je/ da kwa mi
4. /na fu go to lo je/ na o ku ku ne ki kwa mi/ u ma
5. je/ a so ma je/

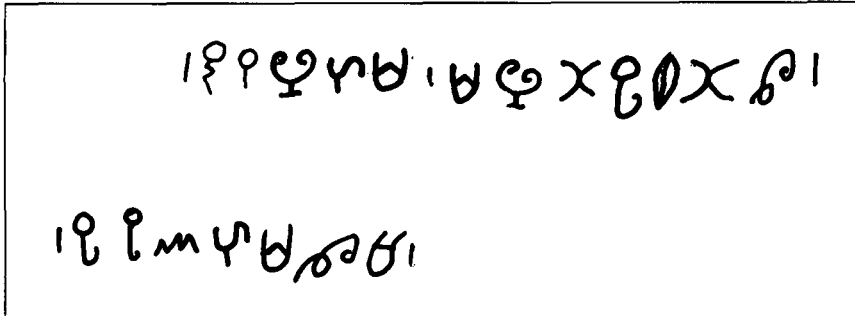
To the right of line 1 the (isolated) word Fisiti, one of the three villages known as Godo Olo, appears.

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Godo Olo/ en gaan sama den kali/
2. Gaanda/ Tjapalanga<sup>21</sup>/
3. /Okuku/ na fu Mainsi/ Da Kwami
4. /na fu Godo Olo/ na Okuku neen kii Kwami uma
5. je/ Asoman/

English:

1. Godo Olo/ Their ancestors they call/
2. Gaanda/ Tjapalanga/
3. /Okuku/ is from Mainsi/ Da Kwami
4. /is from Godo Olo/ it is Okuku who killed the wife of Kwami
5. / Asoman/



TEXT 13. GAANBOLI KONDEE.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. /da sa ka ko de/ de ka li ga bo li je/
2. /ga ga do ko de je ba/

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. /Da Saka kondee/ den kali Gaanboli<sup>22</sup>/
2. /Gaan Gado kondee je ba/

English:

1. /The village of Da Saka/ is called Granbori/
2. /The village of Gran Gado/

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ገጽ ስምንት ስምንት ስምንት  
ገጽ ስምንት ስምንት

ሀሀ ፀፀፀ ስምንት ስምንት ስምንት  
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TEXT 14.

Sign-by-sign transcription:

1. da sa ka ma ma de ka li mi a fo ta ja je/
2. /a sa ni di si ki fi ja je/ na sa ni fu lo we
3. te ta ki si ki fi ja je
4. pa pa lo ka go/ gi wi a la wi bi gi bi gi o di je/
5. da a u ma/ di ben su ku na wan/ fi ga je
6. /To de pi ki

Normal Ndjuka transcription:

1. Da Saka m'ma den kali afo Taaja/
2. /a sani di [mi] skiifi ja/ na sani fu lowe
3. ten taki sikiifi ja
4. Papalo Kago gi wi ala wi bigi bigi odi/
5. dan a uma/ di ben suku na Wan/ finga
- 6 /Tode piki

English:

1. Da Saka's mother they call ancestor Taaja/
2. /the things I write here/ are things from run away
3. time [the period during which the slaves ran away from the plantations]  
talk [?] written here
4. Papalo Kago/ gives all of us big big greetings/
5. Then the woman/ whom they searched for at Wanfinga
6. /Tode has answered

### NOTES

1. Alofaisi 1971; Bonne 1920; Dalby 1968; Dubelaar 1970, 1975, 1976, 1980; Dubelaar & Gonggryp 1968; Gonggryp, 1959, 1960; Gonggryp & Dubelaar 1961, 1963; Huttar, 1987a and b; Intelm 1968; Kahn (1931:205-7); Lie A Fo 1976; Morssink 1917, n.d.; Pakosie 1968; Ratelband 1944; Schoolderman 1978; Sweet 1961; Voorhoeve & Van Renselaar (1962:193).
2. *Kwakwala obeah* is a special medicine (kwak-kwala).
3. The word "dabisan" comes from the French "dame-jeanne," a large bottle in a wicker basket.
4. *Pemba* is white clay with magical qualities.
5. Misidjan Lo: Villages: Sangamansusa, Puketi, Moitaki, Jausa, Adaisenkondee, Poolokaba, Pikinkondee; Dju Lo: Villages: Mainsi, Saniki, Fisiti, Pikinkondee; Kunpai Lo: Mpuusu, Gaan Powi, Tjontjon; Pinasi Lo: Loabi, Sanbendumi; Beei Lo: Malobi, Fandaaki, Saaje; Dikan Lo: Benanu, Wanfinga, Nikii; Njanfai Lo: Keementi; Otoo Lo: Bilose Puketi, Diitabiki; Pedi Lo: Tabiki; Ansoe Lo: Agiti Ondo, Cottica River; Pataa Lo: Loabi (till 1973), Njun Fii (from November 1973 to 1979), Pikinpiisi (from 1979); Piika Lo: Kisai; Lebimusu Lo: Peigudu; Lape Lo, Gaan Powi.
6. Endiliki (Hendrik) is a common Ndjuka name
7. Granman Bambi or Kukudiaku commanded the Ndjuka army which fought against the Aluku Maroons in 1793 and killed their Chief Boni.
8. The inhabitants of Tabiki belong to the Pedi Lo.
9. Anjawe is a bad spirit, a plague for the village. The spirit was brought there by ancestor Wande.
10. "Mi gaanda": for the omission of "mi" in the translation, see Introduction.
11. Akoolu is a name for a beautiful woman.
12. Okei is also called Otjei.
13. *Basija* is a political office in a Ndjuka village. The *Basijas* assist the Captain of the village.
14. Fandaaki is one of the villages of the Beei Lo.
15. Kuwagi or Kuwangi married to Gaula, practiced black magic of the snake God Papágadu to kill his family.
16. Godo Olo is a collective name for three villages on the Upper Tapanahoni: Saniki, Fisiti, Pikinkonde.

17. "Fu pasi" (from the path): a path connects the villages of Keementi and Saaje.
18. The inhabitants of Keementi belong to the Njanfai Lo.
19. Morssink (1919-20) mentions Captain Pankuku from Keementi: he was seriously ill. In the *buku* of Captain Alofaisi from Fisiti there is a list of food which was used to commemorate the death of Pankuku, who had died two years earlier (Dubelaar & Gonggryp 1968:235).
20. Ma Nanai is also mentioned in Text B, line 3.
21. Tjapalanga is better known as Tjapaanda, or Hendrik Kofi Tjapaanda.
22. Gaanboli (Granbori), upstream from Diitabiki, is the seat of the Gran Gado cult.

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GOODBY COLUMBUS AND ALL THAT: HISTORY AND  
TEXTUAL CRITICISM

*Columbus*. FELIPE FERNÁNDEZ-ARMESTO. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991. xxvii + 218 pp. (Cloth US\$ 16.95, Paper US\$ 6.99)

*The Worlds of Christopher Columbus*. WILLIAM D. PHILLIPS, JR. & CARLA RAHN PHILLIPS. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. xii + 322 pp. (Cloth US\$ 27.95)

*In Search of Columbus: The Sources for the First Voyage*. DAVID HENIGE. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991. xiii + 359 pp. (Cloth US\$ 29.95)

*Columbus and the Golden World of the Island Arawaks: The Story of the First Americans and Their Caribbean Environment*. D.J.R. WALKER. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 1992. 320 pp. (Cloth US\$ 12.95)

By the time this review appears in print, the Quincentenary celebrations and/or deprecations of the event will be slowly fading into most welcomed oblivion. There will be, of course, the unavoidable local commemorations of specific events: the discovery of such and such island, the anniversary of some European misdeed, the struggle for the valley of Mexico; but the collective remembrance of the Encounter/Discovery will have been allowed to run its course. In truth, after a veritable flood of publications, seminars, operas, protests, and ghastly movies, one is not too sorry to see the whole affair put safely away for another century. If there is any consolation to this continuous process of recovered memories and history, it is that a good number of sensible and scholarly works have been published – including some of those reviewed here – which demolish the idealization and glorification of the Atlantic enterprise and set the history of the Encounter/Discovery within a proper historical context.

Among the deluge of books and articles on Encounter/Discovery topics, many of these scholarly and pseudo-scholarly *oeuvres* have advanced specific ideological stances or promoted particular causes which in some cases – despite their attractiveness – compromise the very nature of the inquiry. To cite just one example, Kirkpatrick Sale's popular *The Conquest of Paradise*, while voicing views with which I am not entirely unsympathetic, ends up being yet another example of Whiggish history by failing to contextualize fully the events of 1492 and their aftermath.

The four books under review here range widely, from broad examinations of Columbus and his world to a focused discussion and critique of our main sources for the history of the Encounter to an idealized, and often uncritical, view of the original inhabitants of the Caribbean or "Indies." These four books provide a chronological narrative of the period before and after 1492 and are best described in that natural sequence.

William and Carla Phillips's *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* is a careful, clear, and well-crafted account of the world at the end of the fifteenth century. It opens with a brief critical review of the historiography and sources for Columbus's life and then proceeds to provide a broad context for his historic voyage across the Ocean Sea. Drawing upon the most recent scholarship, the Phillipses, both of them formidable scholars of late medieval and early modern Spain and the Atlantic world, offer a sober and clear description of the world, both Old and New, before 1492. The known world in the late fifteenth century, above all Europe, was at a crossroads economically, socially, and politically. In that context, Columbus's enterprise was one further chapter in the long history of European expansion, of the search for new trade, and of developing seafaring technology. As such, the voyages of discovery were also embedded in the long rivalry between Islam and Christianity.

Parting from this general overview, the Phillipses turn to Columbus himself and, adhering strictly to the sources, proceed to dismiss the numerous unfounded speculations that have been advanced about Columbus's origins and life. His pursuit of royal support in Portugal and Spain and the final approval of his plans by the Catholic Kings after earlier rejections are placed firmly in the context of Spanish politics and of the final struggle against Granada. There was nothing romantic or mysterious about Ferdinand and Isabella's decision to sponsor the enterprise of the Ocean Sea. It was, at best, an inexpensive gamble, taken without much expectation of success. Similar myths about the composition of the crew, the actual voyage, and the exact location of the Columbian landfall are equally demolished. Their final chapters examine the conquest and settlement of Europeans in the New World and the ecological, medical, economic, and cultural impact of the Encounter on the world at large.

Felipe Fernández-Armesto's *Columbus*, written before *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus*, covers some of the themes explored by the Phillipses, with certain significant differences. Although also paying attention to the historical context (especially to Columbus's Genoese background – a task that the author had taken on previously in his 1987 book, *Before Columbus*), the focus here is on Columbus himself, a man described as a "socially ambitious, socially awkward parvenu." As in the previous book, Fernández-Armesto examines the sources critically and strips Columbus and his enterprise of the usual mythification. This does not prevent him, however, from speculating about Columbus's personality and psychological make-up. Carefully tracing the sources for Columbus's mental map of the world (Ptolemy, Marco Polo, Pierre d'Ailly, and others), the author concludes with a detailed and most useful study of Columbus's four crossings, leading to an excellent contextualized summary of the Columbian legacy.

These two books bring us to the New World and to the first encounters between European and natives – at first peaceful enough, but by the second voyage marked by violent conflict and plans for the enslavement of the "Indians." D.J.R. Walker's *Columbus and the Golden World of the Island Arawaks* is a narrative of this encounter, of the tragic demise of the Arawaks under the violence of contact and conquest, and of their paradisiacal habitat. Following closely upon published sources, Walker traces those final years of Arawak "idyllic" life, and the destruction of this life by sickness and abuse.

David Henige's *In Search of Columbus: The Sources for the First Voyage* is a careful and exhaustive examination of the sources for Columbus's first journal: the so-called *diario*, as rendered by Bartolomé de las Casas, the latter's *Historia de las Indias*, and the *Historie* or *Life of Columbus* attributed to Columbus's son. Henige's textual criticism of these works – of modern editions and translations and their use or misuse by some scholars – undermines their validity and raises questions as to what can really be known about the first voyage and the exact location of landfall. What Henige illustrates in painstaking detail is a long history of willful and/or unconscious accretions, alterations, and interpretations which transform the original texts and diminish their value. His anger is vented as much on early modern renderings of Columbus's writings as it is on modern editions of these texts. In the end, skepticism is the only escape for Henige, as the line between fiction and history is irrevocably blurred.

In these four books, the reader observes a wide range of scholarly approaches to Columbus and the Encounter. The Phillipses' *The Worlds of Columbus* and Fernández-Armesto's *Columbus* are worthy examples of careful and judicious scholarship. Both of these books examine the evidence in a critical and sober manner, and their assessment of Columbus and

his enterprise is evenhanded and informative. While it is true that our knowledge of the Admiral of the Ocean Sea and his world is, by the very nature of the evidence, limited, what is remarkable is how much we do know and can know about this particular topic. I am not certain that either book will fully dispel the myths about Columbus. Fiction and received opinion is, I fear, often stronger than truth.

Walker's study of Arawaks is well-meaning and written in a loving manner. Alas it suffers from serious flaws. Although he writes with a great deal of earnestness, the author does not read Spanish and this lack compromises his knowledge and use of the sources. There are nagging little mistakes throughout the work; he states, for example, that the population of Spain was 4,000,000 in the late fifteenth century when in reality it was almost double that number. His uncritical reliance on Morison and his dated scholarship (with none of the important work on archeology and no work after 1980 cited) diminish what is otherwise an engaging book.

As for Henige's book, one cannot but admire his fierce critical assessment and his uncompromising search for a text clean of later accretions. In the end, however, no serious historian can ever write history without a critical attitude towards his/her sources. Although Henige's criticism of modern editions is valid, his attacks on the historian's use of these sources is often restricted to local *savants* arguing over the precedence of their homelands or historians who have long been superseded by a more recent and, along the lines of Henige's admonitions, more critical approach to their sources. So let us wave goodbye to Columbus for now and wait for the next century to rewrite anew the diverse histories of discovery, encounter, and conquest.

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THE POLITICS OF PUBLICATION:  
BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS'S THE DEVASTATION OF THE  
INDIES

*The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account.* BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS. Translated by Herma Briffault. Introduction by Bill M. Donovan. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. 138 pp. (Paper US\$ 11.95)

The 1992 Johns Hopkins University Press publication of Bartolomé de las Casas's *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account* has been, I am told, a commercial success. Regrettably, it is a scholarly failure. The translation – a reprint of a 1974 version – is so inaccurate that it barely deserves to go by the name, and the introductory essay that accompanies it repeats the old clichés and familiar misunderstandings that one commonly reads about Las Casas's life and work. The shortcomings of both the translation and the introduction could have been overcome by a deeper engagement with Las Casas's works and greater attention to basic information about sixteenth-century Spanish history.

The English rendition of Las Casas's 1552 tract offers egregious problems because, in addition to distorting Las Casas's text nearly beyond recognition, it presents a view of the Spanish conquests in America that contradicts not only Las Casas's interpretations but the historical record itself. The translator evidently did not understand that the conquests in general were carried out by privateering expeditionaries with or without contracts with the king, and that the conquest of Mexico in particular was undertaken by Hernán Cortés against the orders of the governor of Cuba and without the knowledge of the emperor Charles V.

Both the distortions of Las Casas's text and the more fundamental errors of historical understanding can be illustrated by the translator's treatment of Pedro de Alvarado's conquest of Guatemala. We pick up the narrative after the death of Cristóbal de Olid who, with Pedro de Alvarado, had been dis-

patched by Cortés from Mexico to pursue conquests to the south and south-east. Alvarado is one of the major villains in the *Brevísima*, but the translator missed the point. In addition to being uncertain as to whether Alvarado or Olid was the object of Las Casas's final harangue (even though she had translated the account of the death of Olid a few pages earlier), she annotated the text (p. 137) to suggest that either might have been the target of Las Casas's condemnation. Where Las Casas claimed that Alvarado had been responsible for great destruction (1965:93), the translator attributed all the atrocities listed to him personally (p. 74). Furthermore, where Las Casas had used the active voice, making Alvarado the subject of the sentence and therefore responsible for the heinous deeds, the translator used the passive voice, thus diffusing the culpability that Las Casas sought to attribute.

It is difficult to account for these mistranslations for, despite the number of pages Las Casas devoted to Alvarado, he made one general and explicit statement to the effect that "he [Alvarado], as has already been stated, exceeded all the past tyrants and equals those who exist today, from the outlying provinces to [the city of] Mexico itself" (Las Casas 1965:83; my translation). The translator's own rendition of this declaration (pp. 67-68) provided her with no clue because she had misread the demonstrative pronoun (in the singular), thinking that its grammatical antecedent was the (plural) "kingdoms of Granada." Thus, instead of declaring Alvarado a great tyrant, she extolls the size of the realms of Guatemala, "which, as I have said, exceeded in size and population all the other kingdoms of the past and present time."

The substance of Alvarado's cruelty to the Indians in this account is two-fold. The first is the infamous case of human butchery and cannibalism by which Alvarado permitted and encouraged his native allies to consume the flesh of the enemies his armies conquered, and the other is his use of natives for shipbuilding, for which purpose he instituted forced marches that required them to carry heavy anchors, artillery, and other supplies from the coast of the Gulf of Mexico (Las Casas's North Sea) to the Pacific (the South Sea) (Las Casas 1965:91-93).

In the first instance, Las Casas had written that this Spanish-imposed cannibalism was so horrific that its news spread quickly to other native groups in other territories, all of whom were so terrified by the prospect that they did not know where to turn (1965:91). The translator thoroughly confused the issue by declaring instead that this human butchery was carried out in other parts of the Indies as well (p. 73). Who would be responsible for it, the reader asks, the tyrant Alvarado/Olid? Even more confusing is the statement that this individual (Alvarado or possibly Olid) had this carnage carried out in his "royal kingdom" (p. 73); it was, of course, Alvarado's army's

camp (Las Casas 1965:91). Here, the culprit was the word *real*, which can mean "royal" as an adjective; but here it was a noun, for which military encampment is one of the common (and, in this case, obvious) meanings.

The translator's account of the forced marches across Guatemala (p. 73) is another example of considerable confusion, for which one of the sources seems to have been the Spanish word *uñas*, which the translator rendered in its most common usage as "fingernails," but which in this case referred to the flukes of ship's anchors. First, the translation declares (p. 73) that, instead of marching from one coast to another (from the North Sea to the South), the Indians were taken aboard ship for "voyages to the north and south along the coast." Second, they had to carry anchors "to the coast." Third, instead of Las Casas's description of the Indians struggling under the burden of the heavy anchors, with the flukes (*uñas*) of the anchors slung over their shoulders and backs, the translator conjures up a macabre conga line: "and they marched, thus shackled, those pathetic naked creatures, one behind the other, their hands [*uñas* is interpreted as a synecdoche] clinging to the shoulders and waist of the one in front, carrying heavy burdens on their backs" (p. 73). It is difficult to envision how they would have simultaneously clung to one another at shoulders and waist and carried such burdens. (Las Casas had specified not only anchors but artillery.)

The translator's affective distance from the object of study is revealed in her reference to the Spaniards' "breaking up marriages" (p. 73) when the reference is to the invaders' physically tearing men and women from one another. Another instance is the rendering of the conquistadores' stealing wives and daughters of Indians in order to give the sailors and soldiers "consolation." The word consolation connotes somehow the deservedness of the mercenaries to such rewards, whereas Las Casas's explanation, "to keep them satisfied" (1965:93), had clearly connoted the greedy lustfulness of rapists and robbers.

Such imaginative failures on the translator's part are not as serious, however, as the historical ones. It is well known that Cortés's conquest of Mexico was an illegal adventure that defied the authority of his immediate superior and ignored altogether that of his king. The translator, however, gives the impression that the conquest was royally sanctioned. Again on the subject of the conquest of Guatemala ordered by Cortés, she asserts: "this captain-general [Alvarado or Olid] himself wrote ... a letter to the prince who sent him" (p. 68). Of course, no prince had sent either Cortés or Alvarado out from Cuba, across the Gulf, and into the Mexican mainland. As one might by now expect, Las Casas's statement had had quite a different meaning. In referring to one of Alvarado's letters to Cortés which he had consulted in preparing his own version of the conquest of Guatemala, Las Casas

wrote that "the great tyrannical captain," not a captain-general, "had written to the leader who had sent him" (1965:83). He referred to the mercenary Alvarado having been dispatched by the insubordinate Hernán Cortés. Again, a key word mistranslated has distorted the whole; *principal* means head or leader in a general way, it never means "prince" (*príncipe*), as the translator rendered it.

This type of error reveals a misapprehension of the *Brevísima* much broader than the instance itself and misses the point in Las Casas's having it printed. The Dominican friar never directed his accusations against the monarch but rather against the privateers who acted beyond the reach of the sovereign's control. Las Casas had the *Brevísima* printed for Prince Philip precisely so that the latter could understand the destruction that private adventurers and mercenaries had wreaked when their actions were not firmly controlled by a higher authority. It was the responsibility of Las Casas, the loyal subject, to inform his king about these tragedies so that the latter could take measures to remedy it. Las Casas's dedication to Prince Philip in the prologue (not printed in the translation) makes the point clear: "The king who sits on the canopied throne of justice dissipates all evil" (1965:11).

In sum, Briffault's *The Devastation of the Indies* is an account of horrific deeds, but it is far from being a fair or accurate rendering of Bartolomé de las Casas's *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*. It is a rousing, though somewhat confusing tale; it clearly is not Las Casas.

The introduction to this slim volume is no more helpful because it repeats the commonplaces – and many common errors – about the Dominican's life. To the author's credit, he starts by giving the correct birthdate of Las Casas (p. 3); this has been established since Helen Rand Parish and Harold E. Weidman (1976) proved that Las Casas's birth year was 1484, not 1474. (The Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data in the volume still gives the incorrect year.) This good beginning notwithstanding, many of the statements in the introduction need to be challenged. Among them are the familiar assertions that Las Casas started his Indies career as a soldier, that he held slaves, that he was the first priest ordained in the New World, that he advocated the importation of African slaves to the Indies, that he bypassed Inquisitorial censorship when he had his tracts printed in Seville in 1552-53, that the *Brevísima* was translated abroad immediately after its publication, that Las Casas learned several native languages but naively oversimplified "cultural differences among native tribes," that he was not a social reformer because he was "unable to establish any coherent alternative to the economic and political exploitation" that he condemned, and yet, finally, that he "directly influenced the direction of the New Laws" (pp. 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 20).

Despite all the tomes written on Las Casas, both his early life and his role in



writing royal legislation in the 1540s have been the least clearly known and the most subject to banalities. The newly published work of Helen Rand Parish, who collaborated several decades ago with Henry Raup Wagner in writing the most thoroughly documented of Las Casas's biographies (Wagner & Parish 1967), documents and updates these crucial portions of Las Casas's life. Her introduction to the newly published *Bartolomé de las Casas: The Only Way*, for example, reveals that the only evidence that any member of the Las Casas family was a military man pertains to Bartolomé's uncle Francisco, that the family's business in Hispaniola was not agricultural but commercial, selling provisions to expeditions who would go on to the mainland, that Bartolomé became a deacon in Seville in 1506, and that he was ordained a priest not in America but in Rome, on March 3, 1507, along with twenty-three others, and that he celebrated his first new mass in Hispaniola in 1510, as he had declared in the *Historia de las Indias* (Parish 1992:14-16).

But what about Las Casas's position on African slavery? Parish (1992:6, 10, 49, 201-208) takes up this issue afresh and examines it via the only sources we have on the subject: Las Casas's 1516 memorandum to the emperor, in which he proposed the importation of black and white slaves from Africa, and his own remarks on it in the *Historia de las Indias*. At the outset, it should be noted that Las Casas was not the author of African slavery in the Caribbean; King Ferdinand had begun the importation of Africans as slaves in the first years of the sixteenth century, and, in any case, the extent of Las Casas's influence at court years later, in 1516, is dubious.

Like all Spaniards at the time, Las Casas understood that the Portuguese slave trade along the north and west coasts of Africa depended on black and white slaves taken in the war (considered just by Catholic Spain and most of Christendom) against Islam, that is, that the slaves were captives taken legally in a just war. Only upon writing the *Historia de las Indias* did Las Casas learn that this was not true. On reading in the early 1550s the Portuguese historians' accounts of their nation's oceanic exploration in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Dominican discovered that such slaves had not been taken in the war against Islam but rather were being hunted down as they lived peacefully in their own homes. As to the claim that Las Casas had held slaves in his youth, this was a reference to the Indians held by him in *encomienda*, an institution and practice from which he separated himself in 1514 (Parish 1992:20-21).

One of the most significant aspects of Las Casas's life – well known by his contemporaries, both friend and foe – was that he was a canon lawyer. Parish (1992:13) had foregrounded the issue by the discovery of documentation that confirms that he took two degrees in canon law at Salamanca. Such a background makes all the more plausible the lifetime of work he did in writing

remedial legislation for the Indies and particularly the centrality of his role in drafting – not merely steering the direction of – the New Laws. His contemporaries gave ample testimony to the decisive role he played in the creation and promulgation of the New Laws (Wagner & Parish 1967:108), but clarity had faded with the centuries. Parish & Weidman (1992) and Parish (1993) document and restore Las Casas's central role in these efforts. This enormous corpus of documentation makes clear that Las Casas did indeed pose alternatives to the political and economic exploitation he condemned, and that he was a social reformer in his era in the manner that Thurgood Marshall was one in our own times – that is, working in the chambers of legislative and judicial institutions, rather than in the street or from the pulpit.

On so many of these biographical points, the starting place is the work of Las Casas. His own corpus of writings is unconquerable, it is true, and this accounts in large measure for the commonplaces to which we so easily fall prey. Here, the best guides are the "Narrative and Critical Catalogue of Casas's Writings" in Wagner & Parish 1967 (253-98) and Pérez Fernández 1981. In any case, knowledge of Las Casas's juridical writings (the last of which, the 1564 *Tratado de las doce dudas*, proposed to King Philip the abandonment of the Indies), and his immense *Historia de las Indias*, as well as the remarkable *Apologética historia sumaria*, make it impossible for the serious reader to conclude that Las Casas never proposed solutions to political and economic problems, that his importance as a historian depended on the accuracy with which he estimated the number of Indians who lost their lives at Spanish hands, or that his vision of native American societies was naive and simple.

On the contrary, on the basis of his own experience and the reports of friars and soldiers from all over the Indies, he spent decades writing the *Apologética historia sumaria*, the most comprehensive and detailed critical account of native customs then in existence. But he was not, by his own admission, the master of "several native languages." Readers familiar with his writings know that he made no such claims and that, in fact, the objects of his deep admiration were the friars who were experts in native tongues. The introduction's assertion (p. 20) about Las Casas's naiveté regarding native "tribes," however, reveals how partial an account of Las Casas's works the *Brevísima* is. It is there that one gets the impression that he saw the Indians as one people, but that is because the tract is a work of advocacy on behalf of all of them, not a work of ethnography that differentiates among the hundreds of groups in question. It is a disservice to scholarship to take the part (the *Brevísima*) and make it stand for the whole of Las Casas's works.

To conclude, a few words are in order about the publication of the *Brevísima* in its own time, and the reappearance of *The Devastation* today. As to

his undertaking the publication of the *Brevísima* plus eight other tracts on Indies reform in 1552 and 1553, he should not be faulted for failing to seek "clearance from the Inquisition" (p. 9), because the major laws in Castile concerning censorship, with both pre- and post-publication inspection of manuscripts, were not promulgated until 1558, six years after the *Brevísima* appeared. Furthermore, as the Indices of Prohibited Books (of which the first appeared in 1551) remind us, the Spanish Inquisition practiced post-publication censorship. Second, the sensational *Brevísima* was not "almost immediately translated" (p. 2); it came out twelve years after Las Casas's death in 1566, or a quarter century after its original Seville publication. That first foreign edition, published in French in Antwerp in 1578, had as its purpose not the condemnation of Spanish deeds in the Indies, but rather the goal of serving as "an example and warning to the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries" (Saint-Lu 1984:44). In other words, its purpose was to protest Philip's oppression of the rebellious Netherlands.

What about its publication today? The introduction claims that *The Devastation* possesses an "enduring relevance" for "its presentation of timeless and universal issues of human rights," and that the "essential question" asked by Las Casas in his work is "What is the proper moral reaction to monstrous injustice?" (pp. 22-23, 11, 23). I would argue that such was not the case in Las Casas's day, nor is it so in ours. In 1542, Las Casas himself addressed the issues of human rights and proposed serious legislation for remedial action before the royal council not in the *Brevísima*, but in the document that accompanied it, the *Entre los remedios* which proposed the abolition of the *encomienda* system (Wagner & Parish 1967:108-109). Today, on reading *The Devastation*, readers tend to think not about human rights but rather about "Spanish cruelty," as the introduction acknowledges: "Even today the Black Legend heavily influences Northern European and North American perceptions of Latin American history and culture" because of the common reading that interprets Las Casas's charges as the condemnation of "all Spanish activities and the Spanish national character" (p. 2). As if to prove the point, the introduction notes that, as recently as 1898, the work was used as a tool of anti-Spanish propaganda (pp. 16-17).

So does *The Devastation* really focus our attention, as the introduction suggests (pp. 23-24), on *our* roles as "Columbus's heirs" and "inheritors of the past"? From 1578 onward, the foreign publications of the *Brevísima* had nothing to do with protecting the human rights of America's inhabitants but rather with portraying Spain as a cruel nation and dangerous enemy. I dare say that any publication of the work by the Dutch, the English, or the French was not done with the purpose of turning a self-conscious eye on their nations' own moral position as colonialists, any more than the publi-

cation of Tzvetan Todorov's *Conquest of America* in 1982 has directed readers to an exercise in self-reflection about the injustices perpetrated in our own societies today. Whatever the intentions that accompany the present publication of *The Devastation* may have been, I seriously doubt that it leads us to examine our own national sins, rather than those of others. The introduction speaks of the "propitious moment" that the five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's landfall offers to reissue Las Casas's polemical tract. However, if the goal of the Johns Hopkins University Press was to raise moral issues such as human rights, the claims of native peoples, and the destruction of the rain forests (pp. 2-3), *The Devastation* is not only a poor but totally inappropriate choice.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World.* STEPHEN GREENBLATT. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. ix + 202 pp. (Cloth US\$ 24.95)

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Richard Hakluyt, the English colonizer and compiler of travel reports, once expressed the hope that his faithful recording of the authorial voice would bring England to the certain and full discovery of the world. *Marvelous Possessions* is mainly concerned with this relationship between words and action, between the ideological power of "marvelous" tales and the colonial expansion of Europe. But it does not succeed in conceptualizing this relationship; Greenblatt rather submits to the rules of academic pluralism in providing various interpretations to choose from. Primarily concerned with describing the *representations* of the colonial encounter in America (not the encounter itself), Greenblatt views "wonder" in several ways: as a form of discourse, a "calculated rhetorical strategy" to divert attention from the legal spuriousness of colonialism by filling up the "emptiness at the center of the maimed rite of possession" (pp. 73, 80), but also as a genuine experience, a "systole of the heart," in the terms of Albertus Magnus (p. 16). This definition is contrasted with Descartes's quite different thesis that wonder takes place in the brain and only occurs at first encounters (p. 20). But can Descartes's definition be applied to travel reports that preceded it by a century? And does it support Greenblatt's claim that "Columbus's voyage

initiated a century of intense wonder," producing a communal "startle reflex" in Europe (p. 14) – as if the sixteenth century consisted of nothing but first encounters? Did Jean de Léry and Bernal Díaz experience "wonder" while in the New World or while writing down that experience, and how can we know? These questions reflect the central problem of the book, its unwillingness to give up a hermeneutic approach while at the same time making the rather poststructuralist claim that history is endlessly deferred by the texts instead of being referred to. Adding to the confusion is an idiosyncratic but unspecified use of critical terms such as mimesis, improvisation (sometimes used synonymously with "wonder"), circulation (sometimes a metaphor of domination and imperialism), representation, discourse, power, and irony. Like Mandeville and Paul de Man, Greenblatt seems to be "embracing everything, laying claim to nothing" (p. 50); his text exhibits a "crusading drive" towards "a tolerant perambulation" of different interpretative possibilities (p. 24).

The book is strongest where "new historicist" terminology is reduced to a minimum. It successfully demonstrates the omnipresence of communication problems during initial encounters, despite the texts' claims to the contrary. Greenblatt takes a new perspective on well-known material by Columbus, Cartier, Díaz, Oviedo, and Las Casas, but also includes less known sources such as the reports about De Soto's expedition and Frobisher's trips to Newfoundland. Again and again, we can see the texts reveal the incompatibility of European expectations and native American reality, as well as the writers' efforts to mask this incompatibility by constantly evoking their cultural superiority even where failure is most obvious. Greenblatt furthermore provides a splendid analysis of the function of writing and ritual in early Spanish justifications of conquest. Largely drawing on a recent article by Patricia Seed (1992), Greenblatt shows that for Columbus, taking possession mainly consisted of a "series of speech acts" (p. 57). The legality of conquest, Greenblatt claims, was constructed by written documents: colonial action was largely authorized by writing rather than the law of nations. But what is deferred by this self-validating discourse, one should add, are the legal standards of the time, not, as Greenblatt now and then claims (and now and then denies), history itself. Colonial (dis)possession rests on more than marvelous reports. One feels like wanting to know more about these dialectics of writing and law, of text and action. But instead of addressing these pressing questions Greenblatt registers a gap between colonial discourse and colonial practice: "Words in the New World seem always to be trailing after events that pursue a terrible logic quite other than the fragile meanings that they construct" (p. 63). Are there really two logics at work, one terrible and one benign? Can the words be rescued

so easily from their complicity with colonial violence? In the case of Bernal Díaz, Greenblatt exchanges the gap for a causal chain, claiming that Tenochtitlan could only be represented at all once it was destroyed: "the Mexico first glimpsed is not only strange but ungraspable, its capital not only exotic but in effect imaginary. Only when it is violated, turned into a charnel house, can it be taken as a reality and appropriated" (p. 134). Is destruction of other cultures then the inevitable result of our desire for knowledge? Is human curiosity ("wonder") the driving force of imperialism? Greenblatt gives an alternative account when noting that the *economic* motives of Christian imperialism are already inscribed in the Spanish terms for "crusade": *empresa* and *negocio* (p. 71). Given the opportunity to choose, I'd rather regard the discourse of the marvelous as a rhetorical device of authorization (there *had* to be marvels in India) as well as an imaginary surrogate for non-existing riches. In addition, Greenblatt shows quite convincingly that in the text of Díaz the "marvelous" Aztec practice of human sacrifice serves to create a sense of cultural difference in the face of a disturbing amount of similarities (p. 131 ff.). Louis Montrose (1991) has shown a similar function of the trope of sexual continence in Raleigh's report on Guiana, thereby giving a superb demonstration of the methodical skills gathered under the sign of New Historicism.

If *Marvelous Possessions* quite often seems to circulate around its own indeterminacies, perhaps its contradictions are symptomatic of the complexity of the concept of "wonder" itself which may be seen as both ideological motor and discursive strategy. But these two functions are not unrelated to one another, a fact which Greenblatt's book implies but doesn't openly address.

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*Wild Majesty: Encounters with Caribs from Columbus to the Present Day. An Anthology.* PETER HULME & NEIL L. WHITEHEAD (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. x + 369 pp. (Paper £14.95)

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Amid all the anniversary hoopla of 1992 and the fifth century of the Admiral's most fateful footstep, this modestly thick yet thoroughly solid volume stands out as a reminder of what scholarship can achieve. While provocative in their choice of form, the editors remain slow and meticulous in presentation, and the result is a work useful on many levels, one to be consulted frequently, well beyond a ritual day in mid-October. Hulme and Whitehead have set out to produce an anthology, not a history, a distinction they underline with theoretical significance in their introduction. Rather than seamless narrative they would offer a collection of "some of the materials with which such histories would have to contend," in this case bits and pieces of documents relating to five centuries of European and Carib encounters. The fragments chosen are eyewitness accounts, taken not for pristine observations, but rather those moments which operate most authoritatively in constructions of the past. Arranging these prized shards across a chronological sand, the editors retrace the outline of the incoming colonial waves and the Caribbean's slow and tragic drift away from perceived historical significance. Yet they do so without obscuring the remarkable, indomitable fact of the Caribs' continuing existence.

Appropriately enough the book is divided into five sections, though not by rigid century. The first division covers the period of early encounters and Spanish dominance, beginning with Columbus and lasting until the rise of French and English influence in the early 1600s. The second chronicles the growth of missionary activity, French-English rivalry and the decline of Carib power, continuing through the British military triumph in the Seven Years War. The third and fourth groupings complement each other geographically, with respective focuses on eighteenth-century Black Carib experience on St. Vincent and nineteenth- and twentieth-century Carib experience on Dominica. The fifth and final part collects more recent accounts from 1930 to the present of Carib life on Dominica. Throughout their work Hulme and Whitehead carefully position the material, and although many of the chosen accounts are fragmentary, the editorial commentary lends considerable coherence and continuity. The overall effect is an appropriate



sort of literary geography; in place of a continent of history they provide us with an archipelago of anthology, neatly succeeding in their stated theoretical terms, and also accurately reflecting their chosen ground.

Amid this long sweep across scattered islands of prose, a number of landmarks stand particularly revealing. However worn, the early writings still convey that the term "encounter" describes a meaningful, uncertain, and dangerous event, with no one on the beach fully informed or certain of what lay ahead or behind. In this regard the Letter of Columbus, with its remarkable mix of publicity, political positioning, and geographic observation serves as an admirable introduction. The twin accounts of the seventeenth-century voyage of the Olive Branch give concrete testimony to the crucial role of narration in orderings of fact, while the collected "Case of 'Indian' Warner" reminds us that waves mark edges between worlds, and that colonial stories frequently tell of walking on more than one side of a divide. The oft-cited French priest Labat gives a detailed description of crabs and pepper sauce to mingle in with later oft-repeated lore about the relative culinary merits of different European nationals (the French most succulent, Spaniards hard to digest), adding spice to enduring legends about Carib eating habits. On a different ethnological tack, Frederick Ober's 1880 mix of scientific precision and fluctuating prejudice lives up to editorial claims by marking the beginning of a distinctly modern period, where death may rob one of an important source of oral information, yet nevertheless yield a potentially valuable skeleton. In the rich final section the selections collectively warn against attempts to erase contemporary Carib presence into a romanticized ever-vanishing past, while bringing the dimmer outlines of older colonial encounters up against the sharper forms of the present day. The events of the "Carib War" of 1930 in particular underscore the thin colonial line between tragedy and farce, while Elma Napier's sparkling account of the shooting of an epic 1948 Columbus film on Dominica adds a wry and telling interlude. The still shot of "Columbus discovers the hammock" by itself makes the book, and could serve equally well as frontispiece or endpiece, a twentieth-century view back along the beach.

Like any anthology, not all the selections read easily or equally, and the exact outlines of the compilation will no doubt be questioned by some, with arguments raised for or against the inclusion or exclusion of particular items. Claims against neutral authority notwithstanding, the form itself still lends a lingering aura of comprehensive objectivity, though the intermittent editorial championing of a revisionist Carib/Arawak storyline helps to dissolve the certainty of a narrative order into a livelier jumble of narrative artifacts, reinforcing the interpretive goals set forth in the introduction. This slight edge aside, the tone rests largely closely guarded, with sentences

cautious and positions almost painstakingly entrenched. Yet, after five hundred careless years, who could make overabundance of care a subject for regret?

*Wild Majesty* presents us with an important historical assemblage, one undeniably appropriate to the occasion, but which also will remain on shore long after the commemorative wave of 1992 recedes. Thankfully and responsibly, it might be said, these editors came not to raise Columbus, but rather his long and heavy anchor in the Caribbean sea.

*The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History.*

PHILIP D. CURTIN. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. xi + 222 pp. (Cloth US\$ 42.50, Paper US\$ 11.95)

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Philip Curtin is a historian who likes to paint wide horizons – horizons against which he can make bold historical comparisons. This latest book is no exception to this rule. In four multi-chapter essays, Curtin describes the development of the plantation economies of the New World out of a European (read: Mediterranean) system of large-scale agriculture. Potentially, this approach is very interesting. Too many studies of the plantation system of production are narrow, case-focused, and non-comparative. The approach Curtin offers his readers makes up for these deficiencies, but at the same time his treatment of the subject is rather shallow.

In the preface, Curtin states that the main intent of his book is to set the plantation aspect of North American history in a broad context. His audience is North American, and his treatment of the European aspects is superficial, as he himself admits. It is also of little consequence, as the annotation of arguments is slim indeed. This is a pity, because the link between the early growth of plantations in Europe and the subsequent transfer of this system of production to the Americas is by far the most interesting theme of the book. Other themes include the rise of the African slave trade and its economics in the eighteenth century, the seventeenth-century "sugar revolution," and the demise of the slave system of production in the nineteenth century. All have been discussed before, and better.

The formation of the American plantation economies, based on mono-

cultures, can be studied as an extension of the Mediterranean system of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The early colonial conquest of the Americas had its roots in the crusades and the European conquest of the Mediterranean. In this respect, a comparison of early Mediterranean plantations with those of Brazil, the Caribbean, and North America from the sixteenth century onwards can be very fruitful, and might provide us with new insights into growth and workings of this system of production. Curtin describes most of the areas in one way or another, but does not attempt any comparison. Interesting too, is the link between the early expansion of Spain and Portugal into the Atlantic, and the transfer of the plantation system, with its special technology, from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic, and from there to the New World. The experiments with plantations on Madeira, the Canaries, Sao Tomé, and Fernando Po, were of importance for the development of plantation systems in Brazil and the Caribbean. The experience gathered here with slaves from the West African coastal area, and the contacts with African slave dealers, were especially important for the growth of American plantation economies. Curtin could, and should, have highlighted this aspect. Instead, he describes in excruciating detail the very early relationships between Europe and (West) Africa south of the Sahara, from Roman times onwards. The descriptions of African political systems are also interesting to read, but bear no real relation to the main theme of the book.

Throughout the book, Curtin's lines of development contain some severe over-simplifications. Moreover, he is inaccurate in his descriptions. In his introductory chapter, he describes the system of agricultural exploitation introduced on Cyprus by European feudal families as "thoroughly capitalist" (p. 8). This is not only an anachronism, but might also lead to a misunderstanding of both the basic principles of feudal society and capitalism. There is no doubt that the introduction of slave labor to "the initial work force of serfs and refugees," the building of irrigation works, and the building of a refinery for the production of granulated sugar and sugar loaves by the Cornaro family of Cyprus heralded a new approach to agricultural production. To call it capitalist, however, requires a more detailed analysis than Curtin offers his readers.

It is not very clear what Curtin means by the plantation complex. He includes what are commonly called the plantation economies of the New World (from Brazil in the south through the Caribbean into the southern states of North America) and their forerunners in Europe and on the Atlantic islands. The characteristics of the complex (large-scale agriculture, monocultures, slave labor, absentee landlords, both capitalist and feudal qualities, far-away markets) are not limited to the Atlantic world. Plantations, in one form or another, can also be found in other areas of the world,

for example, East Africa and South East Asia. To my mind it would be very interesting to compare the workings of these plantation systems with those in Mediterranean Europe and the New World as well.

After reading the book, one is left wondering why was it written, and for whom. It is not a textbook, Curtin says (p. x). It does not, however, contain any original research, nor does it contain a polemic argument that deserves discussion. Parts of the text read as if they were typed-out notes for a lecture, and this is how it should probably be read. As a series of introductory lectures for North American students without any knowledge of plantations, slavery, and the Atlantic slave-trade, the text may be of some value. For the serious student of plantation economies, slavery, or the slave trade, the book has very little to offer. In his attempt to construct a holistic image of the development and organization of a so-called plantation complex through time and space, Curtin remains superficial both theoretically and empirically. The lack of purpose of the book is further emphasized by the absence of a formal conclusion. Instead, Curtin finishes with a two-page "retrospect," which contains little to bind the "essays" together. The book could have been concluded by restating the importance of the plantation economies of the New World for the flow of people across the ocean, slavery, and, more positively, innovations in shipping technology and commercial organization.

*A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State.*  
HILARY MCD. BECKLES. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. xv  
+ 224 pp. (Cloth US\$ 44.50, Paper US\$ 14.95)

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The appearance of such a sound history of Barbados is a credit to the vitality of contemporary Barbadian historiography and reinforces the status as an accomplished Caribbean historian that Hilary Beckles has earned with his recent publications, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* (1989) and *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados, 1627-1713* (1989). The compilation of this general history has required Beckles to range far outside the primary areas of research and expertise that his previous books drew on, but while graciously acknowl-

edging his intellectual debts to leading scholars of Barbados, the author nevertheless displays an admirable command of the sweep and complexities of the island's past which he communicates with unusual facility and sensitivity.

Wisely, Beckles has adhered to the constraints and conventions of the genre in organizing his work. Familiar themes and chronology thus demarcate the chapters, and enhance accessibility of the rich scholarship he has drawn on. The book's nine chapters discuss (1) the Amerindian presence, ca. 650-1540, (2) early English colonization, (3) sugar and slavery, (4) slave society and economy, (5) abolition and emancipation, (6) free society in the nineteenth century, (7) economic depression, reform, and rebellion, (8) the struggle for statehood, (9) post-independence issues.

Inevitably, there is some unevenness in the depth of analysis that reflects, in large part, relative strengths in the current state of scholarship. Hence, the four-page text devoted to Amerindians in the millennium before European contact draws on the best available research, but wets rather than satisfies the reader's appetite. But Beckles deserves credit for the chapter's orientation, which successfully integrates analysis of Amerindian Barbados with the fundamentally transformed colonial and post-colonial eras.

The strengths of Barbadian historiography coincide with the author's own research interests to make Chapters 2 through 6 most rewarding. Here Beckles is to be commended not, as in Chapter 1, for teasing information out of sparse data, but rather for distilling and presenting most cogently the fine work of such leading authorities as Richard Dunn, Jerome Handler, Woodville Marshall, Karl Watson and, of course, Beckles himself. His success in incorporating the dominant theme of recent scholarship, by placing the lives and labor of the mass of the island's women and men – slaves – at the center of his analysis, is particularly gratifying.

Chapter 7 argues that the forty years leading up to the 1937 riots were pivotal in determining the island's evolution, and here Beckles reprises the theme of the powerful role played by rebellion and resistance whose thread runs throughout his discussion of the slavery era. Buoyed with money remitted by emigrants working on the Panama Canal, while being detrimentally affected by changes in the sugar industry, Barbados's black population mobilized in the early twentieth century. When the Depression of the 1930s exacerbated racism and poverty, the black working class took to the streets, setting in motion the chain of events that culminated in the demise of colonialism and the restructuring of island politics heretofore dominated by the merchant-planter elite.

In tracing the maturation of this new political order in the transition from colony to state (Chapter 8), Beckles's own political orientation is at its most

obtrusive, and his lament at lost opportunities for more radical political change is harshly critical of the era's most powerful politician, Grantley Adams. The more ideological tone, combined with a heavier concentration on institutional political developments, rather sets this chapter off from the rest of the book.

The closing chapter, "Some Post-Independence Trends," like the opening chapter, leaves the reader wanting more. Indeed, its meager six pages of text read more as a synopsis of topics that should be covered when concluding a history of the island with an examination of its quarter-century as an independent state. Although the author should again be commended for the issues he raises, and particularly for emphasizing how the institutionalization of the cultural renaissance that accompanied independence affected Barbadian society, the brevity of his analysis fails to do them justice.

Beckles's accomplishment in describing "the collective historical experience of all the island's inhabitants" (p. xv) sets him apart from previous authors of general histories of Barbados, and redresses biases (especially, though not exclusively, those related to race, gender, color, and class) that marred their work. Barbadian historiography is indeed fortunate to have at its heart a synthesis of this caliber. Not only does *A History of Barbados* provide the standard for measuring future efforts at writing the island's history, but it can also play a part in filling a significant lacuna in the scholarship of the developing world, by acting as inspiration and providing guidance in the long-overdue compilation of cogent general histories for the many other nations, in the Caribbean and elsewhere, whose experiences with colonialism and its aftermath are as yet poorly chronicled.

*Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados.* HILARY MCD. BECKLES. New Brunswick NJ and London: Rutgers University Press and Zed Books, 1990 and 1989. ix + 197 pp. (Cloth US\$ 35.00, £29.95, Paper US\$ 13.95, £8.95)

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*Natural Rebels* contributes to the small but growing literature on gender and slavery in the Caribbean. Beckles presents the case of Barbados where, unlike the rest of the Antilles, there was an unbroken demographic plurality

of enslaved women, from the 1670s through emancipation. The book's title is somewhat misleading. This work is not in the main about resistance. Important too, much of what makes this study valuable is precisely that the author illuminates the historically specific context of slave women's varied experience of and responses to enslavement. Too bad then, to invoke the "natural" as a means of inviting the reader inside the text.

According to Beckles, the social relations of production and reproduction are the focal points for understanding the logic of Barbadian slave society, and slave women's place within it. "It seems ... reasonable to argue," he writes, "that the requirements of work and reproduction placed women in a position to develop a distinct perspective on the possible parameters of human exploitation" (p. 3). Given that premise, the book is topically structured around the different sites and kinds of work that slave women performed. That organizational approach leads to some repetition of material and gives a sort of programmatic feel to the book. It does, however, establish a main theme: that the relative value placed by owners and by the enslaved women on their productive and reproductive capacities was in part a function of the kinds of work that these women did.

Sex work – in a chapter on prostitutes and mistresses – is one site of production explored by the author. Here he focuses in particular on what he terms "coloured women," slaves of light complexion who were used as prostitutes and mistresses by their owners, largely in Bridgetown. The ambiguities of such a system for the women themselves are perhaps best expressed in the situation in which slave women who absconded from plantations were protected from discovery and capture, only to be hired out to do double duty as houseworkers and sexual partners. In other cases slave women who gained their freedom, found it necessary because of the narrow possibilities available to them, to become prostitutes themselves.

Beckles's discussion of women and labor is anchored by his chapters on enslaved women who worked in the field – "Beasts of Burden" – and those who did domestic labor – "House Women: the Privileged Few." In the chapter on "field women," we find that by the 1660s, Barbadian planters had developed a two-tiered racial and gender ideology. White indentured women (and to some extent light-skinned colored women) were deemed unsuitable for manual labor and taken from the fields, while black women were considered biologically fit (by virtue of their race) for the duress of sugar cane cultivation and all other forms of work in the fields. This ideology, Beckles suggests, formed part of a structural division of labor in which white men were assigned artisanal and supervisory roles while blacks were excluded from all but unskilled physical labor. Thus the majority of enslaved women in Barbados worked alongside men in the fields, doing the

same tasks and being subjected to the same brutal punishments, received the same inadequate dietary rations, and were expected to have similar productivity levels.

In examining the data from Newton and Codrington plantations, for example, Beckles finds that selections for plantation labor gangs were based primarily on age rather than gender. Slave prices for "prime" working slaves were roughly the same for men and women and reflected the planters' concern with production. Most revealing in this regard is Beckles's thesis that only in the latter part of the eighteenth century did concern with the reproducing capacities of slave women take a preeminent place in the management of Barbadian plantations. Before then, he writes, "there was a distinct hostility to natural reproduction ... among many planters who saw it as a loss of labour time from women" (p. 37). Typically, enslaved women worked through pregnancy and were rarely given time to recuperate from childbirth or to nurse their infants; early death for women and high infant mortality rates were the inevitable consequences of such policies.

The few enslaved women who worked as household domestics in a variety of capacities provide the oppositional foil for Beckles's description of field women. He takes their presence in the system to indicate that the experience of women in slavery was not a unitary one. Where, for example, women in the field were removed from close contact with white authorities, female house slaves were not. They used this situational intimacy, Beckles argues, to gain favors and to mitigate the worst hardships of their status as chattel. Not surprisingly, therefore, he finds that female domestic slaves entered into sexual unions with white men in order to have light-skinned children, as a measure of their elite status, and as insurance against a return to labor in the fields. Because he relies on the observations of contemporary whites, Beckles's portrait of domestic slaves is highly problematic. He does make reference to the brutalized condition of many women who worked in the domestic sphere, but his analysis is vested in the dichotomy between field and household. Might there be other frameworks within which to consider black women with a shared status as slaves? By bracketing these women within the hierarchy set by the Barbadian planter class, Beckles is able to describe their differences, but is less able to specify the commonality of their experiences.

Unmediated contradictions that cropped up often proved frustrating. We are told early in the work, for example, that planters viewed the presence of slave women as a stabilizing force on plantations, but in a later chapter on resistance we are informed that planters acknowledged and feared women's resistance activities. Further, Beckles rarely subjects the writings of contemporary observers of plantation life to any rigorous analysis or criticism. It



is hard work for his readers to distinguish between the historian's voice and the sundry opinions of local and colonial whites, often apologists for the system.

Though it is not without flaws, this study will generate much scholarly interest. Beckles's work comes at a time when the historical neglect of black women in New World plantation societies is becoming increasingly impossible. It is best read as a companion text to Barbara Bush's *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* and the ground-breaking work of Lucille Mathurin (1974, 1975).

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*The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938*. THOMAS C. HOLT. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. xxxi + 517 pp. (Cloth US\$ 65.00, Paper US\$ 19.95)

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This ambitious and stimulating book seeks to integrate intellectual, political, and social history by investigating the cluster of ideas that lay behind the decisions taken by British policy-makers and officials, by planters and by ex-slaves, as they tried to deal with the repercussions of emancipation in Jamaica. "Freedom" in 1838, Holt reminds us, was a "historically particular and socially constructed phenomenon"; and he probes the *mentalités* of the British and Jamaican ruling elites to elucidate which versions or readings of freedom were acceptable and which were unthinkable.

In essence Holt has undertaken a study of ideas, and chiefly of British ideas. His central theme is that liberal democratic theory shaped all the

assumptions, and hence the decisions, of the policy-makers (including the abolitionists) and the officials who determined Jamaican affairs in the decades after emancipation. Ex-slaves were to be transformed into a rural proletariat, responsive to market forces and driven by a desire for self-improvement which could only be satisfied by steady wage labor; "artificial wants" would replace coercion. The model here, of course, was the transformation of British agricultural laborers and peasants into a market-disciplined proletariat. Slave-owners, too, were to become modern employers dedicated to rational management and the cash nexus.

But what if former slaves and former owners alike refused to follow the script? What if ex-slaves laid claim to an alternative vision of freedom and planters proved to be recalcitrant towards "free labor ideology and liberal democratic statecraft"? The failures of British policy in Jamaica in the decade after 1838, along with other developments at home and in the wider empire, brought about a decisive shift. By the early 1860s a new orthodoxy had emerged. Liberal democratic theory didn't work in Jamaica because the blacks were "innately lazy," unmoved by the drive to self-improvement; neither blacks nor whites could be trusted with self-government and closer imperial control was essential.

Holt's central concern is to elucidate these ideas and to show how they shaped the making and implementation of policy for Jamaica between 1832 and the end of the century. Excursions into Canadian and Irish affairs illuminate the shifts in British discourse on colonial government, race, and land issues. (Donald Wood pointed out long ago that Ireland was important in the shaping of Caribbean policy in the post-emancipation decades, though he was thinking about Trinidad.) Holt's discussion of these developments is immensely learned and stimulating to read. He is less successful in elucidating what freedom meant for the black Jamaicans, though in his preface he states that his aim is to devote "nearly equal attention" to the makers and the objects of policy so far as the sources permit. Only in Chapter 5, and in a few pages in Chapter 8 (pp. 289-95), does he devote much space to the ex-slaves' world-view. He points out that one can only grasp their ideas and motives by interpreting their behavior, and his discussion of the ex-slaves' aims and aspirations in Chapter 5 is lucid and balanced, though hardly original. On the whole, though, other historians (Mary Turner, Monica Schuler, Swithin Wilmot, Gad Heuman) have done more to help us understand the world that black Jamaicans struggled to make after 1838, and it seems fair to say that this task is not central to Holt's study.

Much of this long book, it should be clear, is devoted to analysis of British ruling-class discourse on problems of freedom, race relations, and colonial policy. The discussion of developments in Jamaica – post-1834 labor/man-

agement struggles, the fate of the sugar industry, peasant development, Assembly politics 1838-65, the road to Morant Bay – is fairly orthodox, even familiar. Specialists on Jamaican or Caribbean history are not likely to be startled by novel data or interpretations, but they will, I think, be stimulated by the lively and sophisticated way in which Holt treats these topics and links them to ideological shifts in Britain.

It must be said, however, that the dates in Holt's title are somewhat misleading, for his treatment of the period between 1866 and 1938, though often interesting, is distinctly sketchy. At times, in this section of the book (Part Four), he seems in danger of losing focus, and Chapters 9 and 10 have a rather disjointed, spotty, epilogue-like quality. The actual epilogue (pp. 381-402) tries to link the struggles of Jamaicans in the 1930s, and even later, to those of the post-emancipation decades; but I did not find this attempt altogether convincing. (The recent book by Abigail Bakan is more successful in elucidating the continuities between 1831-32, 1865, and 1938, though in all other respects it is inferior to Holt's in depth and erudition.) Perhaps Holt's anxiety to link his scholarship with the "concerns of [his] historical present" (p. xviii) led him to take his work up to 1938 and even beyond; but we would have had a more cohesive book, I think, if he had withstood the temptation.

It should be clear that I am not convinced that all the large claims made for this book in the author's preface have been fully justified. But I hope it is also clear that this is a learned, stimulating, and elegantly written work which will interest anyone concerned with Jamaican, Caribbean, and British history in the nineteenth century. By illuminating the world-view of abolitionists, cabinet ministers, Colonial Office staff, governors, magistrates, and planters, Holt has given us a sophisticated and subtle analysis of policy-making at a crucial juncture in the history of Jamaica and the British Caribbean.

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*The Plantation Slaves of Trinidad, 1783-1816: A Mathematical and Demographic Inquiry.* A. MEREDITH JOHN. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. xvi + 259 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.50)

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The history of the slave population of Trinidad is bound to be different from that of the slave populations in those parts of the French and British Caribbean which never changed hands. In fact, it could be argued that Trinidad belonged to two different slavery systems. Until 1797 Trinidad was part of the Iberian Atlantic system and developed very slowly. Only during the second half of the eighteenth century did large-scale plantation agriculture come into existence, particularly after 350 families from the French Lesser Antilles had settled on the island, bringing 33,000 slaves with them. The exports of cotton and sugar increased dramatically.

Unfortunately, the archival legacy of the Spanish administration did not allow the author of this book to analyze the vital statistics of the Trinidad slave population before 1800 in any detail. The situation changed when the British conquered the island. They produced an abundance of statistical material on the slave population. In view of this discrepancy it is impossible to say whether the development of large-scale agriculture and the subsequent British conquest had a negative impact on the demography of the Trinidadian slaves. By 1813, when the registration of slaves in Trinidad was first conducted, the 17,000 slaves were already experiencing all the demographic drawbacks of a young and growing pioneer plantation society, such as a high percentage of recently imported slaves from Africa, a high proportion of men, and relatively few children.

The author has done an excellent job of analyzing these registration data. In addition to the introductory chapters, a chapter on the administrative history of the Trinidad slave registration, and two chapters on demographic and statistical methods, the author provides most of his new information on family structures, fertility, and mortality in Chapters 4, 6 and 7, which bring us closer to solving several of the demographic riddles of Caribbean slavery.

As far as the influences on fertility are concerned, the author points out that a large percentage of the slaves lived neither in nuclear families nor in truncated nuclear families, but outside a family. The percentage of African slave women living without a family was almost double that of creole slave women. The author confirms the outcome of other demographic studies

indicating that slave women living on sugar plantations had fewer children than female slaves living elsewhere. In addition, the author mentions that the nationality of the planters had an impact on the demography of their slaves: on British-owned plantations slaves were worked harder than on the Spanish and French plantations, especially when these plantations belonged to an absentee owner, where the manager was usually interested in short term profits. As a result the fertility of slave women on British-owned plantations was somewhat lower.

Similar influences can be detected in the analysis of slave mortality. Mortality was lowest on cocoa plantations. Slaves working in skilled positions usually lived longer than those working in the field. Small plantations knew a relatively high mortality, which declined until the plantation counted around 220 slaves, at which point the death rate rose again. Mortality rates among creole slaves were lower than among slaves born in Africa.

In his conclusion, the author argues that the fertility rates of the Trinidadian slave population were not disastrously low, but that they were not high enough to compensate for the high mortality among the slaves, especially among slave children. In his plea to study slave mortality, and particularly child mortality, the author confirms the hypothesis of Kenneth Kiple. In this line of reasoning the nature of the slave treatment loses much of its significance. Was the high mortality of children in tropical America confined to the servile population or did it also occur among the free, expatriate Europeans? Unfortunately, the author does not provide us with data on this group. Would these figures destroy the received assumptions that the slave status by itself was the main cause for a poor demographic performance in the Caribbean? The child mortality hypothesis also casts doubt on the effects of the amelioration policy since this policy was mainly aimed at increasing fertility. Yet J.R. Ward (1988) has argued differently. To answer these questions more information is needed on other slave and non-slave populations in the Caribbean along the lines provided by the precise, clear, and detailed analysis of this book.

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*Jews in Another Environment: Surinam in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century.* ROBERT COHEN. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991. xv + 350 pp. (Cloth NLG 150.00)

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Published only months before the author's premature death, *Jews in Another Environment* is a contribution to our understanding of a community at once "remote and unimportant to the [Euro-centered] mainstream of Jewish history" yet "perhaps the most privileged Jewish community in the world" (pp. xiii, 1). Aligning itself with "the new social history," the book has a peculiar agenda – it is explicitly "not a history of the Jews in Surinam[e], nor does it chronicle the growth of a community and its institutions from their origins" (p. 1). Rather, it focuses exclusively on the second half of eighteenth century and organizes itself around the theme of "environment," very broadly defined.

In "The Environment of Migration and Mobility," Cohen traces the shift from prior voluntary movement to frequent forced migration, using various cliometric tools. Passenger lists of incoming ships are analyzed to show, for example, that more Ashkenazim than Sephardim arrived in the late eighteenth century, that most arrivals were unmarried men, and that the great majority of arrivals came from Amsterdam (whence many, part of the growing urban poor, had been more or less expelled by the authorities of the Jewish community). Departing ship lists are similarly analyzed, with Amsterdam found to be the most common destination, and the other half of departees split between Caribbean destinations (mainly, the commercially-flourishing Golden Rock of St. Eustatius) and New England (N.B. Table 2.3, "Departures from Surinam 1771-1795," is misaligned: the New England figures should represent an *aggregate* of Rhode Island, Boston, New London, etc., not an additional row); in the case of departures, business travel was the most common motivation. Unlike other Europeans, the Jews who came to Suriname "did not come to enrich themselves and leave. When they left, it was for business reasons or because the economic crisis [of the late eighteenth century] had forced them out" (p. 34).

Next comes "The Environment of Climate and Health," in which Cohen reviews diseases, health care, mortality (by season, sex, length of stay), and birth intervals, tracing a general decline in the Sephardi population.

The chapter on "The Environment of Crisis Economy" describes, with the help of various tables, the bursting of the plantation bubble during the

1770s and its disastrous effects on the Jewish population, particularly the wealthy Sephardic planters, who soon joined their Ashkenazi brethren (who were mainly engaged in commerce) in the rapidly growing town of Paramaribo.

The next chapter nicely analyzes the cultural and intellectual environment. The final decades of the century saw an Enlightenment awakening that included both Jews and Christians and brought, for the first time, significant numbers of books to the colony. Cohen goes to some lengths to analyze the 433-book, French-influenced library of David Cohen Nassy – “the furniture of his mind” – following an inventory of 1782, and concludes that it “would not have disgraced a Parisian intellectual of the second half of the eighteenth century” (p. 122). Nonetheless, Cohen exaggerates the emptiness of local intellectual life in the periods both before and after the late eighteenth century.

What Cohen calls “The Community Environment” takes up two chapters that deal with the special privileges enjoyed by the community, various legal challenges to communal authority, and the slow progress toward full integration into the administrative machinery of the colony. Conflicts over the status of “Mulatto Jews,” mainly the children of Sephardic masters and their slave women, are of particular interest and lasted for years. Issues involved cemetery rights, seating in the synagogue, and the legality of the establishment of a “black” Jewish brotherhood; their negotiation and resolution show, perhaps better than any other incident in the book, the embeddedness of the Jewish community within the particular colonial context of Suriname.

Cohen’s historical moment captures a colony in steep decline. “From a flourishing plantation society [at mid-century] it had gradually dwindled into a minor appendage to the extended Dutch colonial empire” (p. 175). Joden Savanna, at the beginning of the period the heart of the Jewish community, had been largely deserted. As Cohen puts it in his concluding chapter, what had made Suriname Jews unique (as an independent, rural-dwelling, slave-holding plantation community with considerable legal privileges) was now a thing of the past; what remained (bolstered by the influx of poor immigrants from Amsterdam) – “the Jewish trader in Paramaribo” – “did not greatly differ in character from his colleagues in Amsterdam or London” (p. 176).

Cohen compares his book’s organization to the wheel of a bicycle, with each chapter serving as a spoke to hold it together (p. xiii). For this reviewer, the wheel doesn’t support the weight of the machine. This is history at a distance, a particular style of “new social history” that largely eschews empathy. The author gives readers little sense of the lived experience of historical actors; the account and analysis proceed at some remove from the

everyday world of the men and women who lived in Joden Savanna or Paramaribo. There is nothing on relations with the vast numbers of slaves who surrounded these Jews; indeed, there is very little on the texture of social relations at all. And because the author deliberately avoids telling readers about anything that predates mid-century, they have little sense of the world into which the new immigrants arrived. (Nowhere, for example, is it pointed out that during the period, Jews represented between one-third and one-half of the "white" population or that African slaves outnumbered whites by 20 or 25 to 1.) From Nassy's 1788 classic *Essai historique* to Cohen's final book (passing along the way through works by R. Bijlsma, R.A.J. van Lier, and many others, including an earlier book edited by Cohen), the history of Suriname Jewry has found devoted and often passionate students. But a historical study that balances the specificities of the religious and cultural background of Suriname's Jews with their diverse colonial roles – a broad social history that situates them fully within the developing colony – has yet to be written.

*The Forgotten Trade: Comprising the Log of the DANIEL AND HENRY of 1700 and Accounts of the Slave Trade from the Minor Ports of England, 1698-1725.* NIGEL TATTERSFIELD. London: Jonathan Cape, 1991. ix + 460 pp. (Cloth £20.00)

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Nigel Tattersfield's *The Forgotten Trade* is two books in one. The first, and most interesting, is a detailed reconstruction of the voyage of the *Daniel and Henry*, which sailed to West Africa in early 1700 to buy slaves for the Jamaica market. The second book is a useful survey of the slave trade conducted by merchants in England's minor ports in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Together they provide a comprehensive, illuminating, and deeply disturbing account of this appalling business from the perspective of the English periphery.

At the end of the seventeenth century, the slave trade looked promising to outport merchants looking for a big strike. A law of 1698 opened the business to independent traders upon paying a 10 percent tax on their outbound cargo that would be turned over to the Royal African Company,



which in turn surrendered its monopoly. Moreover, the end of the French War brought a boom to trade and drove prices for slaves and sugar sharply higher. Responding to those opportunities, three prosperous tobacco merchants, Daniel Ivy and Henry Arthur of Exeter and James Gould of Dorchester, decided to branch out and cash in. They outfitted the *Daniel and Henry*, a 200-ton "haggboat" that had spent the previous decade in the tobacco trade, for a slaving voyage, assembled a cargo of cloth, ironware, liquor, and weapons, found a captain and crew, and shipped the venture off on February 24, 1700. An old Africa hand might have anticipated difficulties – the cargo was overpriced, the crew of 44 too large, and the captain of limited experience – but the first leg of the voyage was uneventful. However, once the ship reached the Grain Coast on March 30, difficulties began. The entire region from Cape Mesurado to Alampo was crowded with traders, slaves were in short supply, and the captain's lack of familiarity with local geography, languages, and business conventions began to tell. The ship spent four and a half months sailing the coast before it purchased its full complement of slaves, and about 70 percent of them were female, a poor mix for the Caribbean market. On September 6, after a brief stop at São Tome for provisions and repairs, the ship set off for Jamaica.

Things quickly deteriorated. Some of the slaves had been chained in the hold since April and the ship was badly overcrowded as the captain, trying to make up for the delays and the poor gender mix, had taken on 452 slaves, too many for a healthy crossing. By the time the ship reached Port Royal, 206 of the slaves (and 10 of the crew) were dead, the rest in appalling condition. Port Royal, further, was crowded with slavers, there was little sugar to be had, and the *Daniel and Henry* got caught up in a struggle with customs officials that kept it in port for seven months. When it finally returned to Dartmouth on July 23, 1701, eighteen months after setting out for West Africa, it carried only £300 sterling worth of sugar and some dubious bills of exchange. All told, the venture lost some £1500 sterling. Ivy had died in the interim and Gould was rich enough to absorb the loss, but Henry Arthur went bankrupt and into exile to escape his creditors.

The last half of *The Forgotten Trade* places the voyage of the *Daniel and Henry* in context and adds detail by surveying slave trading activities in the minor outports. While ships from those ports carried only a minuscule portion of the ten to twelve million Africans forced onto American plantations, Tattersfield provides a useful addition to a scholarship that has focused on the big traders in London, Bristol, and Liverpool. And, he suggests, the experience of Ivy, Arthur, and Gould was not atypical. The slave trade brought handsome profits to many, but it was a risky business that required experience and resources to make it pay. Those who tried to break in to

make a quick strike often brought ruin to themselves and death to their victims.

*The Forgotten Trade* is not without difficulties. In particular, the logbook of the *Daniel and Henry*, which forms its core, is not reprinted in full but readers are not fully informed of the rules which governed editing and selection. Nevertheless, this is a valuable book. Aimed at a general audience, it provides a useful summary of current scholarship, fresh detail on a neglected aspect of Atlantic history, and a compelling description of this most appalling of trades, one that manages to analyze the slave trade as a business without losing sight of its horrors.

*Colonialism and Science: Saint Domingue in the Old Regime.* JAMES E. MCCLELLAN III. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. xviii + 393 pp. (Cloth US\$ 52.00)

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Anyone who has ever thumbed through Moreau de Saint-Méry's *Description ... de Saint-Domingue* (1797) will appreciate the context this new book provides for that classic work. Those students of slavery who are not familiar with conditions in Saint-Domingue on the eve of the great slave uprising are even more likely to benefit from *Colonialism and Science*. Yet scholars interested in the social and intellectual preconditions of the Haitian Revolution may be disappointed by the book's narrow approach to "organized knowledge" in Saint-Domingue.

*Colonialism and Science* is divided into three sections. The first, perhaps the most useful to a wide audience, recreates the French plantation colony that existed until 1789. As McClellan notes, Saint-Domingue is *terra incognita* for many students of the eighteenth century, and his book's first five chapters engagingly remedy that condition. The next five chapters supply an overview of science in the colony, covering medicine, natural history, and applied botany, as well as Saint-Domingue's role as an outpost for French scientific observation. There is much here to reward students of the French islands, including a fascinating account of the attempt to smuggle a cochineal dye industry from Guatemala to Saint-Domingue.

The heart of the book, however, is in its final chapters, which are a history

of the *Cercle des Philadelphes*, a scientific society founded in 1784. McClellan charts the *Cercle's* rapid progress to royal and academic accreditation and convincingly refutes earlier scholarship that portrayed it as a Masonic institution.

Yet for all these achievements, McClellan's book is not a "comprehensive account of science and civilization in Saint Domingue" (p. xi). It is too concerned with physical, as opposed to social, science to capture the full story of "organized knowledge" in Saint-Domingue. These priorities blind McClellan to pressures that hastened the downfall of the French colony and the *Cercle* itself.

McClellan underscores the *Cercle's* insistence on the practical benefits of its investigations; he emphasizes that science in Saint-Domingue was aimed above all at increasing the profitability of the plantation system and had little interest in challenging the slave regime. Yet there was tension between slavery's defenders and eighteenth-century science in Saint-Domingue, for the *Cercle's* stress on utility had social as well as technical elements. Some of the group's most prominent members hoped to reform colonial society – not by doing away with slavery, but by improving the civil status of Saint-Domingue's large free population of color.

In using the *Cercle* to illustrate the convergence of science and administration in French colonization, McClellan overlooks this reform movement. For example, the *Encyclopédie* article under *mulâtre* argued that racial prejudice in France's colonies, though a necessary component of the slave system, should be modified in the interest of utility, and specifically, that free men of color should be used to defend the colony. This was justified by a "scientific" evaluation of the physical and psychological characteristics of this group – by the fiscal and military needs of France. Such a reform was attempted several times after 1763, but it was repeatedly defeated by whites who refused to loosen racial codes.

McClellan says little on this controversy, despite the *Cercle's* involvement. The society, like the administrators it courted, tried to promote civic-minded improvements in the colony. In July 1789 the *Cercle* attempted to award a gold medal to a former slave who had founded a poor house. The award was blocked by whites who believed it threatened the "necessary stain" of African descent. McClellan relegates this incident to a footnote (p. 353, n. 84).

But for suspicious planters there was circumstantial evidence linking the *Cercle* to anti-slavery *philosophes* in Paris. The very year the *Cercle* was founded, Saint-Domingue's wealthy free men of color sent a representative to France to meet with the same administrators pursued by the *Cercle* in its campaign for official recognition. That representative, Julien Raimond, was

an indigo planter of one-quarter African descent, who had read the *Encyclopédie* and had undertaken on his own properties many of the technical improvements urged by the *Cercle*. Once in France Raimond delivered his appeal for racial reform in the very language of utility and efficiency that had such success for the *Cercle*. By 1789 Raimond had allied with the abolitionist *Amis des Noirs*.

"Utility" was a sword that could cut two ways in a plantation society driven by the profit motive but based on ill-defined social and racial categories. McClellan describes a "counter-revolutionary purge" of the *Cercle* in 1789 which resulted in the public humiliation of the *Cercle*'s founder as a "traitor." The author attributes this to "deep tensions that rent the colony's little scientific society," but probes no further. By 1791 the *Cercle*'s leaders were presenting papers "on the physical and moral character of the mulattoes" to distance themselves from Parisian abolitionists. For McClellan, this was an extraordinary turn, but he does not recognize that before the Revolution some perceived the *Cercle*'s scientific agenda as threatening the "necessary" division between black and white.

*Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context.* RICHARD H. COLLIN. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990. xviii + 598 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00)

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Richard Nixon is said to have explained his penchant for foreign affairs at the expense of domestic policy by saying that the U.S. economy ran itself and only in foreign policy could a president make his mark. Whether Nixon ever really said this or not is unclear, but U.S. diplomatic historians of the traditional or consensus school seem not only to share the belief but to go well beyond it to claim a virtually hermetic seal dividing domestic socio-economic structure and presidentially-driven foreign policy. Collin's massive reconstruction of Roosevelt's "life and times," heavily based on the protagonist's voluminous private papers, represents a sophisticated and readable narrative account, but one that fails to account for either the Latin American or the U.S. "context" which produced the man and his acts. While far from simple apologetics, this study establishes an interpretive frame-

work that virtually guarantees the most positive reading possible of the man and his deeds, all the while claiming to argue against both the hagiographic and demonizing traditions.

The study has its strengths, and foremost among them is the author's insistence upon the importance of restoring the geopolitical context of the time as the standard of judgment for Roosevelt's policies. The relative weakness of the United States on the world stage and German rivalry in the Caribbean, as well as the prospect of multinational European intervention to collect Venezuelan or Dominican debts, were indeed the parameters within which Roosevelt acted. Moreover, it is no doubt true that the less subtle versions of anti-imperialist or world systems theory, well represented by scholars such as LeFebvre, Healey, or Schoonover working on Central America and the Caribbean, against which Collin argues throughout the work, have been guilty of portraying this time period as little more than a "warm up" for post-World War II American great power politics.

However, this important and timely point is repeatedly compromised by a kind of special pleading typical of American historiographical "exceptionalism" which even an explicitly multinational and contextual study such as this fails to escape. The call for contextualization is too often confused with the sort of atheoretical empiricism in which only the perceptions and experiences of the participants are assigned causal validity. In this version, rather than theoretically informed defense of the traditional position it becomes a life and times study of how Roosevelt may very well have seen the world (or arranged his papers to make it appear).

Collin explores the U.S. and Latin American contexts using very different standards of judgment. For the United States, the "great man" theory is seemingly rejected, when we are told that Roosevelt was really only a talented politician severely constrained by both Congress and partisan politics. However, the apparent "deflation" of Roosevelt's credit or blame for U.S. policies is quickly followed by some extraordinarily sympathetic relativism. Roosevelt is here a man who spoke in typically North American, offensively racist and jingoist language, as did his domestic adversaries, but didn't really mean it. (Collin terms Kaiser Wilhelm's similar rhetoric "terrifying messianic zeal" – p. 71.)

Similarly, U.S. diplomats are alternately portrayed as rarely coming from the monied upper classes (whose interests Collin's opponents see the diplomats as advancing, consciously or not), and as aristocrats who despised trade and mere merchants (pp. 10-11, 38), depending on the convenience for the argument at hand. Anyone familiar with Schoonover's *The United States in Central America, 1865-1914* (Duke University Press, 1991) will be astounded to find that U.S. diplomats in the region could be charac-

terized, even with allowances for rhetorical flourish, as "ordinary commoners."

A similarly indulgent relativism does not inform the author's Latin American contextualizations. If great man theories are rejected for Roosevelt's own context, they are warmly embraced south of the border. While the Colombian leadership is pilloried, perhaps with some justification, as hopelessly obscurantist Conservatives who missed their chance (the deal as it were), rejecting perfectly reasonable and honorable offers from the United States, Collin traces much of the resulting humiliation and disarray throughout the region to the tragic death of great men such as Martí. Curiously, the author even offers fulsome praise for Antonio Guzmán Blanco in Venezuela, risking comparisons with Bolívar that will come as a surprise to both Venezuelans and Latin Americanist historians:

The basic source for such a peculiar view can be traced back to the author's claim that the U.S. experience was one of an exceptionally successful democratic capitalist ("development capitalism") social order. Whether in the argument for no causal link between foreign policy and imperialist economic interest, or in the condescending interpretation of sugar having ruined the development possibilities of Caribbean national societies with its distorting monoculture and income concentration, a pristine vision of successful development informs the analysis of domestic society and politics in the United States. Given this sort of U.S. context as point of departure, the attempt to both refute the world systems or dependency school of anti-imperialist scholarship and establish a different "context" for Latin American (mis)development encounters few obstacles.

However, two elementary questions kept nagging at this reader. Why would it have been irrational for Colombian Conservative nationalists to simply procrastinate and resist any and all attempts to build a U.S.-dominated canal? Must they too have submitted to the demands of "development capitalism" out of respect for some sort of modernity only accidentally being pushed by Teddy Roosevelt rather than the Kaiser? Could it be that they were justified in thinking that any concession would inevitably lead to a complete loss of sovereignty? Furthermore, if it is true that Roosevelt was far more concerned on a daily basis with European and Asian affairs than the Caribbean, and that he could not have foreseen the distant future with clarity, why should one believe that he could not have known that the United States was already then on the verge of becoming the overwhelmingly dominant power in the entire Caribbean region? Such a suspension of belief, far from respectful of historical context, smacks of the special pleading of Reagan era figures such as Elliot Abrams who loudly warned against alleged Sandinista military "superiority" in the region, all the while stu-

diously ignoring the one dominant military force in the region, his own. Much can be gained from reading this exhaustive study of Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean policies and adventures. Readers will be rewarded with a fascinating, if well-scrubbed, portrait of a figure polemical yet today. However, as with many such studies of U.S. diplomacy based on presidential papers, critical readers would be well advised to take along their own version of an historical "special prosecutor" for added security.

*Strategy and Security in the Caribbean.* IVELAW L. GRIFFITH (ed.). New York: Praeger, 1991. xv + 208 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00)

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The world has become increasingly interdependent and complex. The Cold War has ended and the new international agenda is focused on economic, environmental, and societal issues, not only on security matters. In this framework, a broad debate on the limits of the traditional concept of security and its military and strategic dimensions has taken place among scholars. At the same time, the situation in the Caribbean has changed dramatically.

Cuba is no longer a threat and is mainly concerned with its own domestic problems. The Cuban influence in the region has diminished and the Grenada invasion is already part of regional history. The external powers are retreating from the Caribbean or are emphasizing the importance of trade and finance (more than assistance and cooperation) with the regional states. A new security agenda has been drawn up for the region from outside, focusing on drug trafficking, migration, and environment. There is an increasing sense of a geopolitical vacuum in the Caribbean. The anglophone members of the CARICOM are looking more and more toward regional modalities of cooperation and integration with the non-anglophone Caribbean states (such as the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Suriname, and even Cuba) and Latin American continental countries (such as Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela) as actors with a key role in the new regional security agenda.

Notwithstanding all this, the general approach of the volume edited by Ivelaw Griffith still seems immersed in the post-Grenada debate about mili-

tarization and the security dilemmas of small states in the region. This self-centered and paroquial approach ignores the new geopolitical dynamics of the Caribbean and continues to look at the region as if it were reduced to the anglophone West Indies.

This limitation is particularly unfortunate because the volume has some excellent and well documented scholarly contributions, particularly the chapter on "Security Perceptions of English Caribbean Elites" by Griffith and the article authored by Humberto García Muñiz on "Decolonization, Demilitarization, and Denuclearization in the Caribbean," in the first part of the book dedicated to regional security issues. Although the other two chapters of the first part: "Political Violence in the Caribbean" by Neville C. Duncan (which could have benefited from some comparative insights on the Dominican Republic or Haiti) and "Postinvasion Political Security in the Eastern Caribbean" by Clifford E. Griffin are less solid, they nevertheless constitute a valuable contribution.

Unfortunately the second part, dedicated to "National Strategy and Security" and focused on the study of four national cases (Barbados defense policy by Dion Phillips; the case of Belize by Alma Young; the military in Guyana by Ivelaw Griffith; and the U.S. Virgin Islands security situation by Jeanette Domingo), especially deserves the initial critical remarks because they mostly focus on cases already extensively studied from a small state traditional security perspective.

In sum, it is to be regretted that the better contributions in the book are likely to be overlooked in a volume lacking insight and broader regional perspective, while identifying itself with a narrow approach to the concept of security and ignoring more complex Caribbean realities.

*Olie op de golven: de betrekkingen tussen Nederland/Curaçao en Venezuela gedurende de eerste helft van de twintigste eeuw.* M.J. VAN DEN BLINK. Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1989. 119 pp. (Paper NLG 29.50)

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From the very moment the Dutch occupied Curaçao (1634) the relations between the Netherlands and Curaçao on one side and Venezuela on the other have been characterized by tensions and conflicts. The reason for this in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the contraband trade in



particular, which was carried on via Curaçao with the coast of South America. As long as Spain maintained a monopolistic mercantile system in its colonial realm – without providing a sufficient supply and transport of products for its colonies – there was ample opportunity for smuggling via Curaçao. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a new element was added to this. Independent Venezuela had an unstable political structure; civil wars and revolutionary changes of power succeeded each other rapidly. As a result, the trading center Curaçao became important as a hiding place for Venezuelan political refugees and as a basis for conspirators who prepared a revolution in Venezuela. Curaçao tried to profit from these tensions as much as possible. But this inevitably caused problems. As soon as the island or the Netherlands took sides this could have fatal consequences, for today's refugee could become tomorrow's ruler, as became evident in 1870 when Antonio Guzmán Blanco – expelled from Curaçao not much earlier – succeeded in taking over power in Caracas. Immediately after his assumption of power, ships of Curaçao merchants were seized by the new government.

In the twentieth century, when a big oil refinery (Royal Dutch/Shell) was established in Curaçao, which refined raw material imported from Venezuela, the relations between Venezuela and Curaçao (and the Netherlands) took on a new dimension. The mutual dependence made it necessary to establish stable relations. *Olie op de golven*, by the Dutch writer Van den Blink, deals with the diplomatic relations between the Netherlands/Curaçao and Venezuela during the oil-period. The author confined himself to the years between 1908 and 1935, the period of the dictatorship of Juan Vicente Gómez. During the first half of this period there existed no official diplomatic relations between the Netherlands and Venezuela; when diplomatic contacts were resumed in 1921, W.G.E. d'Artillac Brill was appointed Dutch ambassador to Venezuela. He held this office until 1935, the end of the Gómez period. On the basis of a great many examples the author demonstrates that Brill was on good terms with Gómez and could influence his decisions. That proved favorable for the Dutch oil interests in Venezuela and Curaçao.

The author deals extensively with a number of complications concerning the oil production, some concessions and Venezuelan plans to build a large transshipment port on the peninsula of Paraguaná. In all these matters the Dutch and Curaçao economic interests were threatened, and so the Dutch embassy was called in for help – together with English diplomats – to avert calamities.

In his turn Gómez also was eager to have good relations with European countries (and the United States), since he was dependent on foreign investments for the exploitation of oil reserves. Not only to protect his own posi-

tion, but also to keep the investment climate favorable, Gómez quenched each protest against his government. Political stability in Venezuela and consolidation of Gómez were in the interests of the oil companies. The Dutch government, too, realized that Dutch economic interests would benefit from political stability in Venezuela.

However, Curaçao was also a hiding place for political refugees from that country. How were they to deal with this? Should the rights of the refugees now be subordinated to economic interests? Should the Venezuelan request for an extradition treaty be met? In discussions on this question the Dutch distrust of Venezuelan jurisdiction played an important role. Brill was aware of the negative aspects of Gómez's repressive administration: the absence of personal freedoms and rights, the corruption, the clique of yes men around the dictator, etc. Due to lack of independent judges in Venezuela, extradited political refugees could not count on a fair trial. The extradition treaty was never concluded. However, the governor of Curaçao did get instructions to keep a closer watch on foreigners. From that moment the stream of refugees shifted to Puerto Rico. Nevertheless, in 1929 opponents of Gómez succeeded in invading Venezuela from Curaçao (in what is known as the Urbina incident).

The policy regarding the relations with Venezuela was entirely determined by the ministers of Foreign Affairs and Colonial Affairs in The Hague, in concert with the embassy in Caracas. Although central in the discussions, the part which the Curaçao government was allowed to play in the decision-making was remarkably limited. Sometimes the governor of Curaçao was even deliberately kept ignorant of information. It is even more striking that there was so little consultation between the Dutch ambassador in Caracas and the governor of Curaçao. The need for intensive contact was certainly not very great on Brill's side. In his opinion the Dutch governors did not have the faintest insight into Latin American affairs.

Van den Blink succeeded in delivering an interesting, concise, and clear outline of the (diplomatic) relations between Venezuela and the Netherlands in the period between 1908 and 1935. With the help of archival documents from the departments of Foreign Affairs and Colonial Affairs, he managed better than his predecessors to point out the arguments which played a role in determining the Dutch policy toward Venezuela. Thanks to his discoveries in the archives he was repeatedly in a position to improve upon previous books about this subject. Some criticism could be expressed regarding the composition of the book. However, its greatest shortcoming is that it is written in Dutch. In discussing some questionable points in which the interests of the Royal Dutch/Shell were at stake, the author proves that B.S. McBeth did not give full credit in his *Juan Vicente Gómez and the Oil*

*Companies in Venezuela 1908-1935* (Cambridge, 1980) to the role of the Dutch diplomatic representative and too often ascribed diplomatic successes to the actions of English diplomats. As long as this kind of criticism is published in Dutch it will escape the notice of Anglophone scholars, who will therefore not have the opportunity of adjusting their views.

*Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica, 1960-1972*. OBIKA GRAY. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991. xiv + 289 pp. (Paper US\$ 19.95)

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Obika Gray's *Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica, 1960-1972* is one of the most recent attempts to analyze the nature of post-independence politics in Jamaica. More specifically, its objective is "to understand the impact of radical social movements on political change in Jamaica" (p. 1). The endeavor is refreshing because it makes individual assessment of all social movements deemed to have contributed to change in the island. Gray is quick to note that the book is "a work of historical reconstruction" which "demanded extrapolation and inference" (p. 13). It is within the context of interpretative reconstruction that students of Jamaican political and social history are likely to evaluate the work. E.H. Carr has emphasized the importance of interpretation in writing history but at the same time cautions that one interpretation is not necessarily as good as another. In the present case, I would argue that flaws flowing from the conceptual framework tend to muddle the analysis.

The nature of political economy of the post-colonial state is the hub around which any analysis of political development occurs. Because the post-colonial state is never an island unto itself but has its roots grounded in the structure of colonialism, there are fundamental constraints in terms of external and internal vested interests which dictate the nature and direction of politics and the limits of flexibility of the democratic process. The social and political history of Jamaica demonstrates such constraints; it also illustrates the "natural" limitations of a small island as well as the reality of geo-politics in the climate of the Cold War. Gray is not unaware of these crucial limitations but they are not part of the pivotal focus of his conceptual framework beyond their perfunctory mention.

The analysis is therefore caught in an attempt to move away from modernization theory and neo-Marxist conceptualizations of the post-colonial state. The result is a contradictory eclecticism. Thus, "the Jamaican state may be characterized as an authoritarian democracy" (p. 10). The Jamaican state is at once authoritarian and democratic because it has "pluralist" and authoritarian features. Gray is rather vague in defining what constitutes the "positive" and "negative" features of authoritarian democracy. Moreover, in applying his "positive" and "negative" features to Jamaica, he fails to analytically and empirically disentangle procedural democracy from substantive democracy. It is difficult to evaluate such categories as "high," "medium," and "moderate" in understanding authoritarian democracy.

The lack of rigor in conceptualizing the Jamaican problematic stems in part from the fundamental failure to grapple with the role of race, class, and color. Gray seems to minimize the interest, solidarity, and allegiance of the ruling classes to the extent that power struggles within these classes are interpreted as sharp and irreconcilable. The class difference between the PNP and JLP ruling elite was not essentially a difference of kind. The PNP was hardly "an effective organ of radical change" (p. 230). Instead, it was a solid, integral, and loyal part of the ruling classes. Just as features of procedural democracy are confused with substantive democracy, Gray confuses radical rhetoric embraced by the PNP with radical change. It is perhaps more accurate to argue that the PNP played a pivotal role in maintaining the equilibrium of the capitalist order; it acted as a safety valve for social movements. But even as Gray elevates the role of the PNP to an agent of radical social change, it is rather surprising that his account of the period 1960-72 devotes limited attention to the role of the PNP.

Despite certain flaws in the analysis which flow from lack of rigorous conceptual grounding, Gray has nevertheless made an important contribution to the corpus of knowledge on post-independence political and social development in Jamaica. The interpretation is interesting, provocative, and in some ways incisive. The book's contribution lies in bringing together a complex array of social groups and showing how they affected Jamaican political and social history.

*Stains on My Name, War in My Veins: Guyana and the Politics of Cultural Struggle*. BRACKETTE F. WILLIAMS. Durham: Duke University Press, 1991. xix + 322 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.95, Paper US\$ 18.50)

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At a moment when some cultural critics deride ethnography as a colonialist discourse, Brackette Williams has made a compelling case for continuing to work in the ethnographic tradition. Precisely because it is richly ethnographic, *Stains on My Name, War in My Veins* would, I suspect, be quite recognizable to earlier generations of anthropologists – one can imagine Malinowski, Rivers, Benedict and others reading and learning from this book. Yet at the same time, Williams's account of "the politics of cultural struggle" in a peripheral, post-colonial society makes a significant contribution to contemporary scholarly debates.

Williams's research was conducted in a Guyanese coastal community (pseudonym Cockalorum) with a population of roughly 5,000. Her account of daily life in Cockalorum focuses on how its residents "make a living" (how they secure income) and how they "make life" (how they live in a fashion they regard as properly social, humane, and desirable). In presenting this material, Williams eschews any separation of cultural data (e.g., the meaningful contrast between "making a living" and "making life") and sociological data (e.g., descriptions of work activities, requests for favors between households, etc.). The result is a compelling sense of the ethnographic observer's presence in the community, and a narration that makes clear that Guyanese "efforts to produce a culture and a nation" are grounded in "everyday struggles" (p. xiii). Throughout the narration, Williams situates Cockalorum in the context of both Guyanese history and the contemporary Guyanese nation-state.

What emerges from this fine-grained and contextualized ethnography is a picture that is both specific to Cockalorum and illustrative more generally of post-colonial Caribbean social life. The people of Cockalorum, Williams reports, believe that a person's disposition and abilities are determined by their ancestry. Ancestry is talked about as "ethnic groups, races, nations, peoples, or castes," (p. 168) but whichever label is used for it, ancestry is understood to be both biologically and socially inherited. Moreover, ancestral identities ("African," "East Indian," "Amerindian," "English," "Portuguese") are attached to virtually every aspect of observed behavior. Partic-

ular ancestral identities imply, and are implied by, work habits, religious worship, styles of social interaction and more.

This symbolic transitivity of ancestral identities, on the one hand, and virtually any observable personal trait or behavior, on the other, has profound consequences for the lives of Cockalorums. For example, intense industriousness does not have the same meaning for Indo- and Afro-Guyanese. For Indo-Guyanese, such industriousness is something expected, something that confirms their racial identity. For Afro-Guyanese, it is something that causes "a shock" to observers (p. 177-84), something that is seen as a temporary aberration that won't last, or something that reveals the strength of other ancestral components – which is to say, something that is not theirs qua Africans, even if it would otherwise be credited to their personal agency. Thus, ancestral typifications result in a characteristic alienation of persons from their own agency.

Moreover, because cultural traits and social institutions are bearers of ancestral identities, these identities can persist (as Drummond has argued) independent of empirically observable social groups. Few English remain in post-independence Guyana, Williams reports, but the valorization of "things-English" remains a "ghostly" presence in contemporary society. Similarly, "the Amerindian" is a significant presence in Cockalorum even though Amerindians are largely absent from the community. These "ghostly" traces also haunt efforts to build, or construct, a Guyanese nation. Again and again, purported national traits are identified by a purported ancestral source. Thus, rather than substantiating the existence of the Guyanese nation, "national traits" are the stuff of disputes over cultural property and over which ancestral groups contributed more to the nation.

Finally, as Williams argues, the strength of ancestral typifications means that "consciousness of class positions need not necessarily weaken an emphasis on ethnic identity" (p. 183). In Cockalorum, one's class position always has racial meanings – and vice-versa. Class does not operate as many theorists expect, because it is always raced, just as race is always classed. The larger lesson here is clear and powerful. Rather than choose between "class" and "race" as analytic categories, we must attend to their meaningful articulation in social action. And indeed, this is precisely what Williams does best. In a series of finely sketched studies of complex nuptials (Chapter 9), she demonstrates that equality and hierarchy cannot be socially expressed in Cockalorum independent of racial meanings.

It may be worth noting the few weaknesses of this admirable work. Historically minded readers, for instance, may find Williams's discussion of the emergence of ancestral typifications to be chronologically vague. In the absence of such historical detail, Williams creates the impression that these

typifications have been stable and unshifting in Guyanese history. In addition, some of the more theoretical passages in this book could have benefited from further editing (see, for example, the paragraph that spans pp. 194-95).

Yet these flaws are minor compared to this work's many strengths. *Stains on My Name, War in My Veins* is one of the very best ethnographies we have of the post-colonial Caribbean. It should be read by every Caribbeanist, and by all those who doubt the perduring value of the ethnographic enterprise.

*Working Miracles: Women's Lives in the English-Speaking Caribbean.* OLIVE SENIOR. Bloomington: Indiana University Press (and Bridgetown, Barbados: ISER), 1991. xiii + 210 pp. (Cloth US\$ 35.00, Paper US\$ 14.95)

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At long last! Scholars, activists, and planners concerned with women's issues, particularly in the Caribbean, have waited a long time for this volume. *Working Miracles* is the compilation of research produced by the multidisciplinary Women in the Caribbean Project (WICP). A three-year (1979-82) endeavor, the WICP was directed by Joycelin Massiah of the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of the West Indies, Barbados. Research was carried out almost exclusively by women scholars from the three campuses of the University of the West Indies (UWI) – Mona (Jamaica), Cave Hill (Barbados), and St. Augustine (Trinidad and Tobago) – and the University of Guyana, the School of Continuing Studies (formerly Extra Mural Centres), and small social-welfare agencies in the countries targeted for investigation: Barbados, Guyana, St. Vincent, Antigua, and Jamaica. WICP goals were to establish, in the region, a data base for teaching, research, and planning purposes, and to develop guidelines for a cohesive social policy that recognized the needs of women and drew on their skills and talents for program planning and execution. The magnitude and importance of the WICP was heightened by its multi-level and interpersonal research methodologies, and the large number of women participants – approximately 1,526.

The Foreword, by Joycelin Massiah, driving force behind the WICP, positions the volume within the growing body of literature concerning the

“mosaic” of the reality of Caribbean women’s lives coming from the social sciences, arts, and literature. In this way, Massiah introduces the author of *Working Miracles*, Jamaican writer, Olive Senior, who has produced a beautifully written text – comprehensible to all and jargon-free. However, there were speculations concerning how a leading fiction writer, editor, and journalist could work with data coming from a grand-scale social science project. Further, what were the chances of Caribbean women-centered/feminist theory being enhanced?

Olive Senior took command of the writing project by using what was readily available to her. After her own introduction, the book follows the WICP outline of issues and concerns as they have appeared elsewhere: in-house documents; published working papers; interview materials; and the WICP special double issue of *Social and Economic Studies* (vol. 35, no. 3 & 4 1986), which featured articles written by the researchers themselves. Senior uses the *SES* collection of scholarly work and her own scholarship as her theoretical base for the analysis.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I, on childhood and socialization, focuses on the household setting, socialization, gender-role learning, education, and gender-role stereotypes. Part II looks at family household issues concerning the concept of motherhood and family household organization. Part III deals with sources of livelihood and delves into the areas of the conditions and situations of working women and informal economic support systems. Finally, Part IV centers around women in the political domain and gender relations, and ends with the Conclusion.

By framing the repartee between the women and the interviewers, the readers and Senior become bystander listeners to these dialogues. When the moment seems right, Senior uses literature, music, history, and government documents alongside the responses of the women. For example, to elaborate on a remark made by an interviewee that “marriage have teeth,” Senior cites a children’s wedding-game song from Tobago to drive home the point.

The volume’s limitations, however, are seen in the area of academic social science. The references are not up-to-date, and the bibliography is far from what it should be. Senior relied on the *SES* publications. Theories advanced by those authors in 1986 continued in the current work. Hence, the analyses in *Working Miracles* do not test any theoretical boundaries. This is unfortunate, because, since 1982, former WICP researchers, and their colleagues in the region and abroad have already answered some of the inquiries Senior posed for future research. For example, numerous publications have appeared examining the impact of structural adjustment policies on women, their dependents, and men in the region. Export processing zones have expanded, contracted, and been protested against throughout the region.



Informal Commercial Importers (ICIs), the majority of whom are women, play important roles in national economies. These events have been, and continue to be analyzed in detail by scholars as well as activist-researchers.

Nonetheless, *Working Miracles* delivers an important message about women's lives in the English-speaking Caribbean and brings to the forefront Caribbean women's scholarship. Further, Senior celebrates the predominantly working-class Caribbean women whose lives are represented in the findings. Olive Senior makes a major contribution to the study of the complex lives of women in the English-speaking Caribbean, to the cross-cultural study of women of African descent, and to the better understanding of the bases of Caribbean women-centered/feminist activism.

*Política sexual en Puerto Rico.* MARGARITA OSTOLAZA BEY. Río Piedras PR: Ediciones Huracán, 1989. 203 pp. (Paper US\$ 11.95)

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Experienced readers of gender studies will quickly appreciate the path-breaking nature of *Política sexual en Puerto Rico*. Its author, a leading feminist in both academic and popular circles, has taken on the challenge of identifying the forces that have oppressed women and continue to subordinate them in the context of the island's political domination by the United States. While drawing on a vast body of theoretical literature, Ostolaza Bey's work is readily accessible, as it consciously touches on many issues of concern for Puerto Ricans generally and for women particularly.

The greatest strengths of this admirable effort at explaining how colonialism and sexism affect the political socialization of men and women on the island (p. 13) lie precisely where its most glaring deficiencies are located. Because Ostolaza Bey directs her message of liberation to a wide audience (presumably Puerto Ricans who have some familiarity with race, class, and gender analysis), she fails to address issues of interest to a more scholarly feminist readership and refuses to engage in debates that affect the lives of all women. Although this book will make sense to several variously politicized segments of Puerto Rican society, it will have limited impact in the larger theoretical literature on feminism and, more important, on popular understandings of gender relations.

Ostolaza Bey succeeds in problematizing a number of issues particular to Puerto Rico for a public that, if receptive, is probably misinformed. If asked, most people could not readily discuss the ways in which colonialism informs sexism. Most people will not have thought about this, even briefly, precisely because they operate in a context defined by capitalist domination and male oppression. More important to the author, the connections between status and female subordination are rarely part of individual, let alone public, agendas for discussion. Yet, what could be more relevant to a society with one of the highest rates of male unemployment, crime, drug addiction, and alcoholism in the world (p. 165)? The Puerto Rican independence movement, the author argues, must face the challenge squarely by bringing gender into its strategy for national liberation (p. 27).

This book deals with complicated and sometimes radical positions in a way that should make sense to Puerto Ricans. Ostolaza Bey's account of the development of three major party lines (statehood, independence, and commonwealth) and their programs for women (Chapter 4) is particularly strong. Likewise her description of the achievements and setbacks of Puerto Rican feminism throughout the twentieth century will have meaning for most (Chapter 5). Even those who remain unconvinced of the need to promote women's interests will recognize the tragic consequences for both men and women of colonialism (pp. 43-44) and sexism (p. 165) delineated by Ostolaza Bey. Substituting the word "man" for "colonizer" in the writings of Albert Memmi (pp. 39 ff.), she draws clear parallels between the two types of oppression. Open-minded readers will find her arguments reasonable, and her call for change compelling.

It is unfortunate, then, that the usefulness of the analysis does not transcend the confines of the island. Ostolaza Bey does not locate her study within the major currents in contemporary feminist thought, as she fluctuates between a Marxist and a postmodernist reading of the situation of Puerto Rican women. As a methodological tool, the dialectic lends itself well to a discussion of how the colonial state and the "sex-gender system with masculine dominant" (p. 33) affect the socialization process of both men and women. It is weak, however, in explaining the location of male domination in the sexual division of labor and in the repression of feminine sexuality (pp. 22-23). Similarly, postmodernist analysis illuminates the important search for a feminine episteme (p. 21), but obscures the interplay between class, race, and sex in our ways of knowing (p. 28), a central theme for Ostolaza Bey. Thus, the book never fully connects the legitimation of the social order to the construction of discourses of domination (p. 23).

More important than the author's theoretical ambivalence, however, are

its practical implications. Ostolaza Bey begs a number of questions of direct relevance to contemporary women's lives. The role of work outside the home as an instrument in the liberation of women (p. 164) requires both psychological and economic explanations. Although the statistics offered in Chapter 2 are enlightening, they must be accompanied by substantial comments on the social construction of gender roles by men and women alike. In addition, the author should have made at least some passing remarks on the radical feminist position that denies men any permanent role in family life. Likewise, the nature vs. culture debate is much richer than Ostolaza Bey would have us believe (pp. 144 ff.). Her equivocal discussion of rape as a sexual crime (pp. 114-15), as well as her blanket condemnation of U.S. feminism as imported (p. 166), betray her limited understanding of the relevance of the essentialist argument.

This book will undoubtedly initiate much debate within the Puerto Rican public to whom it is directed. Ostolaza Bey has done a fine job in dealing with some thorny issues of major importance to the island. Circumscribed by its Puerto Rican context, however, her discussion of them does not reverberate on feminist scholarship or on social constructions of gender.

*Delinquency in Puerto Rico: The 1970 Birth Cohort Study.* DORA NEVARES, MARVIN E. WOLFGANG & PAUL E. TRACY; with the collaboration of STEVEN AURAND. Westport CT: Greenwood, 1990. x + 232 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.95)

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In recent years, concern with the problem of juvenile delinquency has grown throughout the Caribbean region. One consequence of this has been the increased attention directed toward it by policymakers; another has been the effort by social scientists, criminologists in particular, to describe and explain it – an effort which has typically involved the importation of research techniques, and the application of models, created in the industrialized world. Such is the case here.

The so-called "cohort study" is a method developed to overcome some of the most serious limitations in conventional delinquency research – the reliance, for example, upon official statistics which present only the number of arrests and cases counted singly in separate years. This information can

be useful; one learns, for instance, that juvenile crime in Puerto Rico did not increase significantly between 1964 and 1987. But it says nothing about how many juveniles are involved or how many times they have been involved: thus it is impossible to tell whether or not each offense is being committed by one individual. Furthermore, without a longitudinal perspective, one learns nothing about the development of delinquent – and criminal – careers.

Cohort studies are designed to follow a carefully defined group of young people for the entire period of their childhood and to determine how many delinquent acts – or contacts with the police – are recorded for them during that time. By creating this kind of a database, repeat offenders may be detected and patterns of criminal conduct – by social, ethnic, and income groups – examined over an extended period.

This book presents a replay (in San Juan, Puerto Rico) of a cohort study conducted in the United States by three sociologists (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin), which looked at all males born in 1945 who lived in Philadelphia continuously from the ages of ten to eighteen. The U.S. study found that while 35 percent of its sample group had at least one recorded police contact sometime during childhood, a much smaller group – less than one-fifth – was actually responsible for the great majority of arrests, for both serious and nonserious offenses, and that among this group roughly a third (designated as “chronic” offenders) were responsible for over half of all the offenses attributed to the entire cohort. In addition, it found that both racial background and socioeconomic status (SES) were related to official labeling as delinquent, the former more strongly than the latter. The point could also have been made, though it wasn’t, that with non-whites being more likely than whites to have low SES, to have experienced multiple school and residential moves, to have low IQ scores, and to have completed a low grade in school, the results of the study were consistent with the historical and existential experience of black people in Philadelphia (Lane 1986) and in other North American cities.

Similarly, in the Puerto Rican version, the authors stay close to the numbers themselves and make no attempt to provide an analysis. They examine the historical record as compiled by the local authorities and compare it to the Philadelphia study. On the basis of a sample of more than 24,000 people born in 1970 and living from the ages of ten to eighteen in the three districts of the Greater San Juan Metropolitan area (girls as well as boys), we learn, first, that males are more likely than females to be both delinquent and repeat offenders; second, that non-whites show a higher rate of chronic recidivism as do those who live in public housing, with the two categories overlapping; third, that males also predominate both in overall delinquency

and in serious offenses, with non-whites having the greater share of murder, forcible rape, motor vehicle theft, and other "UCR" (Uniform Crime Reports) index crimes; four, that there is a strong correlation between drug use and delinquency, especially with regard to the more serious offenses; five, that delinquent activity peaks in the middle teenage years; and six, that the police and the courts use their discretion in the handling and disposition of cases, with the latter generally favoring some type of non-custodial treatment. Unlike Philadelphia, however, there is no evidence of racial bias in the way in which delinquents are treated and their offenses adjudicated.

But that is all we learn, along with the fact that delinquency in San Juan, as measured by this study, is a much less serious problem than it is in a typical North American city, despite the same pattern of chronic offenders, especially among non-white, young people. Nothing more is made of this finding, or indeed of any other finding, although once again it could be argued that the disproportionate representation of non-whites in criminal statistics reflects an important aspect of the experience of Africans in the New World, from their initial reception as slaves through the culture of plantation life to the "urban plantations" of public housing projects in big cities. But the authors stay away from any socio-historical or anthropological interpretations and make no attempt to provide any kind of broader context for the "conclusions" of the study. (They do not even discuss the division of residents of Puerto Rico into "whites," "triguenos," and "non-whites," and how those distinctions are made.) Instead the reader is presented with an inverted account of the construction of official reality (p. 4). For even though this is not how statistics are routinely presented (or even interpreted) by the officials themselves, they are still official statistics – and what they tell us is still how the criminal justice system perceives its clients and how its agents do their job. About delinquency itself – or delinquents – the authors say very little, although they point in some interesting directions. This is one of those studies where the tables, which make up most of the book, really do not suffice. Their story is yet to be told.

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*AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame*. PAUL FARMER. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992. xiv + 338 pp. (Cloth US\$ 35.00)

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In a crude, make-shift prison on the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, linger 275 men, women, children, and newborn infants. They, or members of their families, are charged with carrying HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. All of the prisoners are Haitian (*Haiti en Marche* 1992 6[45]:3).

The first concentration camp for the HIV-positive coincided, in 1992, with the publication of an illuminating and eloquent study of the Haitian experience of AIDS. Because *AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame* went to press as Haiti's first democratically elected president took office, its author, Paul Farmer, could have foretold neither the violent overthrow of the new government nor the stream of more than forty thousand refugees "interdicted" by the U.S. Coast Guard as they fled the ensuing repression. Farmer nevertheless presaged how the U.S. government would misappropriate AIDS to prejudice Haitians seeking protection in this country. He further anticipated the skepticism and noncompliance of those being blamed, and punished, and offered medical therapy. "Most won't accept that they are infected with the virus," remarked one of the few journalists allowed to visit the Guantánamo AIDS colony. "They seem to think a horrible trick has been played on them" (National Public Radio, Dec. 29, 1992).

Farmer is a "physician/anthropologist" and *AIDS and Accusation* draws both from his experience with patients at a clinic in the Artibonite and from his ethnographic research among local residents. This readable book will certainly engage experts on Haiti, the Caribbean, and AIDS, and it should and will reach policy makers and medical professionals as well. Farmer does not interrupt the captivating narrative with complex theoretical and methodological discussions, referring more curious readers to articles published elsewhere and to extensive endnotes. Haitian experts may object to the unsystematic furnishing, in the notes, of Creole transcriptions of the many eloquent testimonials that make this book so compelling. (I did not always concur with the English translations of my fellow Haitianist. There were also several misspelled Creole words.) A thirty-page bibliography follows. Although not error-free, one merit is the many citations of important Hai-

tian scholarship published in Port-au-Prince, often overlooked by foreign researchers.

The first of *AIDS and Accusation*'s five sections retells how peasants of Kay, in the fertile Artibonite valley, became refugees of a hydroelectric dam for the distant capital city to benefit expanding North American offshore reassembly and tourist industries. The survivors, narrating their personal tragedies in the wake of the displacement, impress us with their talents to "read the world as socially constructed" and "to point to the effects of impersonal or historical forces in [their] lives" (p. 242). To gauge the impact of these forces on this "people with history" (p. 177), however, we need to understand their past and present social organization, as well as ownership and settlement of land, but Farmer offers scant descriptions. He acknowledges linkages between systems of kinship, land tenure, and religion, citing other research, but he does not explain these linkages, omissions which portend his subsequent struggle with the rhetorical question, "What is voodoo?"

Voodoo is an outsider's construct. Descriptions of "doing voodoo" in this book mainly derive from informants affiliated with the Episcopalian mission and self-defined as strict Christians. They seem ambivalent toward the complex of relations – social, religious, and territorial – summed up by the term "to serve *lwa*." Persons who serve their *lwa* (inherited spirits) are strangely silenced, with the possible exception of Tonton Mèmè, a priest and healer. Tonton Mèmè is nonetheless rendered exotic by Farmer, apparently to compensate for a lack of data and/or limited understanding of "serving *lwa*." The priest mentions a spirit whose name he does not recognize in the literature; he cavalierly dismisses the spirit as "another story" (p. 46). Farmer's reverence for colonized peoples' history notwithstanding, he overlooks the history personified by this ancestral spirit, whom the priest inherited and serves as a member of a land-holding kin group. Later, quoting Tonton Mèmè, he interrupts the English translation with untranslated Creole terms – terms of major cosmological and ritual significance – as though the concepts are impenetrable or inexplicable (p. 91).

By contrast, the struggles and sufferings of the first three residents of Kay to die of AIDS are judiciously and poignantly rendered in Part 2. Parts 3 and 4 situate present-day Kay in broader geographical and historical contexts. Farmer presents the chronology of HIV in Haiti and the Caribbean and demonstrates how AIDS became a "West Atlantic Pandemic," inexorably following the path of North American capitalist expansion, including tourism, into the region. Those nations most thoroughly incorporated into the U.S. sphere have the highest rates of HIV infection. AIDS appears to have spread in Haiti in tandem with escalating rural collapse, migration to the

city, the rise of institutionalized prostitution, and the promotion of exotic Port-au-Prince as a chic homosexual tourist resort.

In the final section, Farmer illuminates how the villagers' perception of AIDS as a weapon of sorcery (a man-made, "sent" illness) was linked in concentric spheres of accusation to the very center of the West Atlantic system. He describes the image of Haiti in the profoundly racist American imagination. Long before AIDS, Americans had accused quintessentially exotic Haitians of voodoo, cannibalism, poverty, and disease. Into this equation, the American scientific community shamelessly, and authoritatively, added the term "AIDS." "Wild conjecture," not evidence from research evidence, was the methodological norm for scientific articles branding Haitians as the source of AIDS in the most prestigious medical journals. The "calculus of blame" was authoritatively deployed, throughout the 1980s, from the highest levels of U.S. public health agencies. Farmer examines the counter-reactions of victims of "an epidemic of discrimination." Some suspect the "Federal Discrimination Agency" fabricated the AIDS threat in order to license persecution and exclusion of poor people of color. Others think that AIDS is germ warfare waged by the U.S. government to eliminate them. Thanks to *AIDS and Accusation* we see the full dimensions of the "horrible trick" playing now in Guantánamo Bay.

Paul Farmer has recorded a compelling story of people who have been blamed for causing AIDS and who are increasingly suffering and dying from the disease. Many would do well to get infected with the humanity of this fine book.

*Haiti: A Research Handbook.* ROBERT LAWLESS (with contributions by ILONA MARIA LAWLESS, PAUL F. MONAGHAN, FLORENCE ETIENNE SERGILE & CHARLES A. WOODS). New York: Garland, 1990. ix + 354 pp. (Cloth US\$ 48.00)

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With this research handbook, Robert Lawless has provided a thorough, accurate bibliography with accompanying subject essays for researchers and the lay public interested in Haiti. It concentrates on English and Haitian Creole, rather than French, literature and is especially strong on materials produced in the 1970s and 1980s.



For the research specialist, no published bibliography can ever be complete. New material constantly appears, and as Haiti drew increased attention through the 1980s one will never find an utterly comprehensive listing of sources. Lawless fortunately recognizes this limitation and appropriately subtitles his work "a research handbook." It is one that will be especially important to the new student of Haiti or even an old student who is interested in some new subject matter on Haiti.

The handbook has thirty-one chapters covering everything from general bibliographies on Haiti to publications on AIDS, popular writings, and even butterflies and ornithology. No matter what one's particular interest in Haiti, this book will be helpful. The introductory essays to each chapter (some of which were completed by experts other than Lawless) are especially useful. Thorough bibliographies can overwhelm the interested reader, especially one new to the topic who does not yet know which sources are more likely to be important. The introductory essays provide short, but excellent evaluations that will greatly assist the reader in determining which sources should be consulted first.

In the best of all worlds, all the journalists rushing to cover the next Haitian political disturbance or arrival of boats in south Florida would consult this work before writing their stories. At a minimum, neither they nor scholars will any longer have an excuse that they can't find penetrating and reliable scholarly materials on Haiti. Lawless has produced an important source book that reflects the increased importance and maturation of Haitian studies.

*Equatoria*. RICHARD PRICE & SALLY PRICE, with sketches by Sally Price. New York & London: Routledge, 1992. 295 pp. (Cloth US\$ 27.50)

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*Equatoria* is an engaging and elegant description of the Prices' *mission scientifique* up the Maroni, a river dividing Suriname and French Guiana, during the summer of 1990. Their mandate was to collect Maroon artifacts for a prospective Musée de l'Homme Guyanais, a museum the French Conseil Régional supposed would salvage and increase public awareness of fast waning "traditional ways of life" – Amerindian, Maroon, and Creole alike.

The Director of the museum-to-be – who remains nameless throughout, referred to rather forbiddingly as “La Directrice” – is a well-born Guyanese with a recent doctorate in folklore. Two French ethnologists, Pierre and Françoise Grenand, are invited to supervise the Amerindian collecting and display, while the Maroons are left in the Prices’ charge. The civil war in neighboring Suriname makes that country effectively out of bounds, and so their collecting forays are limited to the Guianan hinterland. By this time almost 10,000 Suriname Maroons are refugees in the country, but the Prices are asked to focus on the French-Guiana-based Aluku Maroons, for whom “art is simply not something that they care very much about any more.” Under strong pressure from development programs and thoroughgoing *francisation*, art is no longer integral to their everyday life.

The Prices co-authored a personal diary of their expedition – in which they refer to each other in the third person- and this appears on the right-hand pages of *Equatoria*. Sally Price’s exquisite sketches of many of their acquisitions are reproduced on the left, along with excerpts from an extraordinary array of sources – from Voltaire, Jonathan Swift, and John Stedman’s eighteenth-century *Narrative of a Five Years’ Expedition, Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*, to Joseph Conrad, Michel Leiris, Roland Barthes, and Edouard Glissant – not to mention an in-flight Air France magazine instructing visitors not to consider [Boni/Aluku] Maroons “like strange animals,” as well as germane passages from their own earlier books and even reviews thereof! One nasty reader of an earlier Price & Price book is cited as saying “It’s rare to find a co-authored art book where *both* authors are blind!” and another reviewer as stating that “The only heroes of the book are Richard and Sally Price.” But this playful self-referentiality and intertextuality is, in the end, quite serious, as they constantly examine their own motives for assuming the role of museum collectors. Indeed the Prices are scrupulously self-conscious and self-critical throughout, doubting the legitimacy and the worth of their collecting and the proposed museum at every turn.

The counterpoint between the left-handed excerpts and the right-handed journal is multilayered and unstable. A number of the quotations simply provide an historical or anthropological context for their exploits which we read about on the right. But more often they serve to ironize their own activities or observations, even to render them problematic. Leiris’ confession in his diary of the Mission Dakar-Djibouti, *L’Afrique fantôme*, that “The life we’re living here ... is like that of a circus troupe that’s always on the move, but only to present the same show over and over” is cited at a moment when the Prices obviously feel that this is no less true of themselves!

But at telling moments the direction of the critique is reversed. Back in Cayenne, having returned from their foray upriver, they ruminate on the kind of exhibition of Aluku life the museum might mount, concluding that a permanent exhibition on the disappearing world of Aluku art – which is what the museum itself seems to be leaning towards – “would be a political and intellectual cop-out.” Yet they are equally careful not impulsively to endorse the countervailing valorization of hybridity, creolization, and métissage that is so à la mode today: “The idea of a master narrative [structuring a museum display] that’s neither a requiem for ‘vanishing races’ nor a mindless celebration of ‘Callalou Culture’ is something to conjure with.” On the left at this point they cite two passages from the 1988 exhibition catalogue *Caribbean Festival Arts*, one by Judith Bettelheim (“The more diverse the ingredients, the sweeter the soup”) and another by Robert Farris Thompson (“Gone is the notion of a single canon. Bring on the Callaloo.”)

The manifest narrative of their own trip upriver to Maripasoula and back is accompanied by other transformations. Initially they fear that “non-violent (non-hegemonic)” collecting is in the end oxymoronic – that all collecting, for a museum or otherwise, is inherently coercive and vicious – and that the only possible “value” they could give the activity would be in their writing about it. (Obviously the kinds of valuation are various, from the intellectual capital accruing to the Prices for such an original book as *Equatoria*, to the exponential increase in the exchange-value of the cloth, calabashes, and wooden artifacts they collect [they buy the museum a round tray in Kotika for around \$280, supposing it could fetch \$10,000 on the art market], to the symbolic value for the museum deriving from the objects’ exhibition.) The museum’s estimation of value in terms of rarity, age, use (*patine d’usage*), and difficulty of fabrication is all-too-predictable, and moreover fails to allow for how value is conceptualized in the society concerned. If indeed, the Prices wonder, they are obliged to fashion an exhibit of a culture of yesteryear, wouldn’t such a venture be more legitimate if it could be housed in Aluku territory itself rather than for consumption by tourists in a Cayenne suburb? Or might, they muse, “there be enough redeeming value [for themselves *and* for the Maroons?] in simply representing Alukus (and other Maroons) as dignified, cultured peoples to a Cayenne audience that sometimes sees them as only one step up from animals?”

However, as soon as they begin their collecting – of anything from a nineteenth century embroidered cloth to a carved cedar Saramaka attaché case – their ethical (but not epistemological) reservations are immediately turned on their head. Far from stealing (after the fashion of the Mission Dakar-Djibouti) or duping Aluku to part with treasured artifacts, their quandary is that they can never buy enough! They are forever having to turn

down offers from people – many not French citizens unable to secure regular wage labor – who are desperately short of money for everyday necessities. “Truly, it’s hard to keep up with all the offers!” And when they do find and purchase objects of “museum quality” (always in quotes), the objects have often already served their social purposes and have little special meaning for their owners. As they remark at one point, “A woman who decides to sell (to us, a gendarme, a tourist – it’s all the same to her) thinks of it as no big deal. She’d simply rather have the money than the extra paddle.” There is a refrain throughout the diary which reveals their underlying anxiety, something they never quite manage to repress: “Our participation, our being here, changes nothing.”

Most of the diary consists of a series of almost surreal vignettes, of encounters in the course of collecting. Before leaving Kotika, for instance, they visit an old woman. “We ask about a *ketebe* – a rolled woven mat – we see against one wall. She says matter-of-factly she can’t sell it, it’s for her burial. If she didn’t have it, she explains, they’d have to bury her in plastic and she’d rot much faster.” Captain Adiso would like them to photograph his nineteenth-century, formerly termite-infested stool for the museum, but under pressure from his peers is not willing to part with the object itself. A woman will *give* Sally her calabash but *not* sell it.

If their own presence changes nothing, what yet becomes clear is that the exogenous demand for Maroon artifacts *does* make a difference, and a considerable one at that. Almost all “museum quality” Aluku sculpture is in *other* peoples’ museums or *other* people’s living rooms – whether those of tourists, doctors and nurses, or gendarmes returning to metropolitan France after their three-year tours of duty in Guyane. And this demand is not, in the final analysis, free of violence. As they note at one point, “There’s definitely a pattern of younger men simply taking things from their mothers or aunts and selling them off.”

Never before, to my knowledge, have the psychosocial dynamics of collecting been laid bare in such an honest and perceptive manner. This brilliant and provocative book is essential reading for anyone interested in the representation (and evocation) of cultures, whether in the Caribbean or elsewhere, in the museum or on the page.

*Grenada*. World Bibliographical Series Volume 119. KAI SCHOENHALS. Oxford: Clio Press, 1990. xxxviii + 181 pp. (Cloth £29.00)

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Although this volume covers the entire post-Columbian period of the Caribbean island-nation of Grenada, a preponderance of entries are from the brief four and a half years (1979-83) spanned by the Grenada Revolution. Such a bias, asserts the compiler, is attributable to the vast outpouring of literature covering this epoch. Despite efforts to locate material relating to the earlier period, the compiler almost apologetically admits that both the "introduction and the bibliography contained more information on life during Grenada's revolutionary government than any other phase of that nation's history" (p. xiii).

The introduction provides a survey of the island's history. In four pages, the reader is taken on an all-too-brief excursion through developments up to about 1870, with the other twenty pages devoted to the twentieth century. While it is tempting to conclude that this uneven treatment is merely a reflection of the nature and quantity of entries included, it certainly makes for unbalanced coverage of the period with which the book purports to deal.

The full significance of this work rests in the broad scope of its entries and the varied topics that are covered. Neatly laid out by Clio Press, it contains some thirty-seven separate headings, forty-two subheadings, and a total of 793 listings. In addition to the standard written works covering traditional disciplines, the compiler has included listings of photographs and sketches depicting various aspects of life, as well as catalogues of published maps, some dating as far back as the eighteenth century. Although the main target of the series, and this volume, is references in English, Schoenhals has included entries in French, Spanish, and German as well. This diversity of works reflects both the checkered nature of the island's history and the international attention it has received in recent times. One suspects that a more complete search would have unearthed material in Russian and Dutch, for example, when the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary goings-on attracted so much international coverage.

It is perhaps natural and understandable that an undertaking of this sort should have some flaws. A cursory perusal has uncovered glaring loopholes which this reviewer finds difficult to explain. How does one account, for

example, for the omission of volume two of Tony Martin's 1985 *In Nobody's Backyard: The Grenada Revolution in its Own Words?* Subtitled "Facing the World," it contains speeches detailing the foreign relations of the revolutionary government and its leaders' concern with counterrevolutionary activities and threats of foreign invasion during the final climactic months. Also missing are *All of Us*, (Havana, Cuba 1982), *Marryshow Infant Workbook* (Grenada, 1983), and Bernard Marshall's pioneering 1972 Ph.D. dissertation, "Society and Economy in the British Windward Islands" (U.W.I., Jamaica). "*To Construct From Morning*": *Making the People's Budget in Grenada* (Grenada, 1982), *In the Mainstream of the Revolution* (Grenada, 1982), *Report on the National Economy for 1982 and the Budget-Plan for 1983 and Beyond* (Grenada, 1983), and D.G. Garraway's 1877 *A Short Account of the Insurrection of 1795-96* are likewise mysteriously omitted. One wonders about the criteria utilized to determine which publications were to be included. Apart from many nineteenth-century publications available in the British Museum, there is an abundance of recent publications on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Caribbean which devote considerable attention to Grenada.

And yet, one is of necessity impressed with the pain which the compiler took to find articles published in regional and local papers and journals, as well as international publications that covered events surrounding the Revolution. Naturally, most of these cover political and economic issues.

Overall, then, while *Grenada* is a useful starting point for anyone interested in the country's recent political history, the serious scholar is advised to consult additional bibliographies.

*Dominican Republic*. World Bibliographical Series Volume 111. KAI SCHOENHALS. Oxford: Clio Press, 1990. xxx + 211 pp. (Cloth £32.95)

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*Dominican Republic* provides a select annotated listing of published works about this country and its people, their history, their political, economic, and social institutions, their literature, arts, and architecture, and many other things. Like all other volumes in the series, it focuses on books and articles in English; but it also lists and evaluates works published in other languages

if no relevant or comparable works in English are available. In this volume, about 35 percent of the entries deal with materials published only in the Dominican Republic.

The book follows two guidelines, one announced by the publisher, Clio Press, in the Foreword and the other by the compiler, Kai Schoenhals, in the Preface. The publisher's guideline is that each book in the series should provide an interpretation that "expresses [the country's] culture, its place in the world, and the qualities and background that make it unique." The other guideline is the compiler's declaration that the purpose of the book "is not to present a comprehensive bibliography but to stimulate interest in the Dominican Republic."

Taken as a whole, *Dominican Republic* would seem to fulfill the expectations of both the publisher and the compiler. Its expression of the country's culture, place in the world, and unique qualities derives from the publications listed and described under such headings as "The Country and Its People" (items 1-22), "Travellers' Accounts" (65-86), "History" (129-407), "Nationalities and Minorities" (414-428), "Religion" (454-469), "Social Conditions" (472-493), "Politics and Government" (502-520), "Foreign Relations" (543-607), "Economics" (608-630), "Agriculture and Rural Conditions" (665-685), "Literature" (718-760), "The Arts" (772-822), and "Mass Media" (837-880).

As indicated above, History is by far the largest section of the book. The fact that it contains so many entries (278 items, 31 percent of the total) may be explained in part by the compiler's professional background and his personal attachment to the country. Schoenhals teaches Caribbean History at Kenyon College (in Gambier, Ohio), has visited the Dominican Republic frequently and for varying lengths of time, and has long studied its history. Besides, his wife is a Dominican. Quite understandably, stressing Dominican history is for him a desirable way to "stimulate interest in the Dominican Republic."

The large number of works cited in the History section may also be explained in part by the tumultuous events that have occurred in the Dominican Republic over the past century, and in particular since 1916. In that year the United States occupied the country and ran it, more or less as if it were a battleship, until 1924. That intervention led to the emergence of Rafael Trujillo, whose cruel dictatorship began in 1930 and lasted until his assassination in 1961. During those two periods a large number of books and articles appeared – some defending, others decrying what was going on, still others simply trying to give an unbiased account.

The events of the next five years encouraged the publication of many more books and articles, for the hapless republic had by that time become

the focus of international attention. Between Trujillo's assassination on May 30, 1961 and the inauguration of a newly elected president on July 1, 1966, no less than seven successive regimes held power. The period was enlivened also by the outbreak of a civil war and by the intervention of the U.S. Marines on orders from President Johnson, allegedly to protect American lives and to prevent a Communist take-over. When the assassination occurred, Trujillo's trusted lieutenant Joaquín Balaguer was serving as president of the republic; when the period ended, Balaguer was paradoxically back in office as president – having won the 1966 election by a huge majority, thanks in part to support from the U.S. government.

Schoenhals does an excellent job of compiling and evaluating the flood of Dominican and American books and articles to which those events gave rise. He also provides a helpful guide to the much less exhaustive coverage of the Balaguer era that followed (see items 366-407) – an era, incidentally, that has not yet ended. Balaguer, now 85 years old and nearly blind, is serving his fifth term as president.

Other sections of this bibliography arouse the reader's interest in a variety of ways. In the section on Prehistory and Archeology, for example, one finds references to fascinating accounts of the talented Taino Indians, who could not survive even the first century of Spanish domination. In the Literature section, mentions of the writings of Pedro Mir, the most famous Dominican poet, catch the eye, as do the short stories of Juan Bosch and the highly regarded history of Dominican literature by Joaquín Balaguer. Another example of this book's usefulness is its section on mass media, which contains a discriminating appraisal of each of the country's seventeen daily newspapers and weekly magazines.

In short, a fine example of the bibliographic art!

*Mass Communications in the Caribbean.* JOHN A. LENT. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1990. xviii + 398 pp. (Cloth US\$ 36.95)

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To know this book one must know the author. John A. Lent is undoubtedly the world's most published scholar dealing with Caribbean mass communication topics and issues. He is an indefatigable researcher, analyst, and



writer. His interest in the Caribbean emerged in 1968 and has progressed through fifteen forays into the region, resulting in more than one hundred personal interviews, and a significant amount of time spent in various libraries throughout the Caribbean and North America.

Lent knows the Caribbean; he knows the people, places, and events. He places this all within a knowledgeable understanding of the region's history, the forces that shaped it, and the conditions that currently affect the nature and development of Caribbean mass communications into the next century.

The 27-chapter volume under review emerges from a collection of over fifty articles Lent previously authored about the region, though he wrote six new chapters for it and included four previously unpublished essays. All contemporary chapters are updated to 1987-88. Chapters are broadly classified into two parts: regional and country perspectives and topical perspectives. Several are written using a case study approach.

Lent's writing is interesting and well-documented. He is a consummate scholar, seriously pursuing information no matter where the search may lead. This results in a richly referenced resource for anyone interested in a historical overview of mass communication development in the Caribbean. The historical framework offers a baseline for future chroniclers; the bibliographic section is the most extensive to be found on this topic.

Lent's work is immensely valuable, especially when dealing with islands and topics largely ignored by others. His concern for "small" islands, such as Dominica, St. Lucia, Montserrat, and Antigua, and for islands outside of the English-speaking Caribbean, such as Martinique, Guadeloupe, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, distinguishes his contribution to Caribbean mass communication literature.

At times, the relative attention paid to particular topics becomes uneven. Sometimes Lent cuts the discussion unfortunately short; elsewhere he offers a highly detailed account of a precisely focused topic. Some subjects receive a superficial treatment because of the enormity of the discussion, including chapters in the "Topical Perspectives" section, which suffer from covering too much geographically diverse material, over too long a period of time, in too few pages. Lent is to be lauded for such attempts, however.

The field benefits from overarching attempts at comparing historical trends of diverse mass communication cultures in the region. Lent deserves a high rating for the energy, motivation, and scholarship involved in integrating this material.

In the broad reading of this text one senses a "scattershot" approach, perhaps understandable in individually authored material written as a result of wide and varied experiences in the Caribbean. Sometimes chapter organization is imposed more by the trend of Lent's work than by a rational

progression of time, geography, or issues of critical importance. The strongest chapters deal with Cuba, the French Caribbean, and the Netherlands Antilles.

Often, Lent's left-of-center political, social, and philosophical beliefs are reflected in his writings. This leads to a clearly discernible perspective on the issues discussed (especially regarding current U.S. government attitudes and policies toward the Caribbean). While Lent does offer alternative views, data, and perspectives, an overall perspective is nevertheless engendered.

In sum, this book is enjoyable to read, and serves well both as a primer for understanding the mass communication scene in the Caribbean and as an academic text on international mass communications in general, or on the development of mass communications in the Caribbean specifically. In either case, the reader will be richly rewarded by the experience.

*La migration de l'Hindouisme vers les Antilles au XIXe siècle, après l'abolition de l'esclavage.* MAX SULTY & JOCELYN NAGAPIN. Paris: Librairie de l'Inde, 1989. 255 pp. (Cloth FF 395.00)

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Since the First Conference on East Indians in the Caribbean, sponsored by the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, in 1975, studies of the Indian diaspora have become a burgeoning field. This research interest, however, is still largely limited to the anglophone area, such as Trinidad and Guyana where Indians figure significantly in the total population. While a few studies in the French Antilles have treated Indian immigration (e.g., Achéen 1972, Singaravélou 1975, Farrugia 1975), other researchers have been preoccupied by the question of cultural persistence and reinterpretation (e.g., Lasserre 1953, Horowitz & Klass 1961, Horowitz 1963). Even with renewed local interest in Indian identity (*indianité*) in the French islands, the academic focus has not shifted noticeably. The work by Sulty and Nagapin, in its study of the survival and maintenance of Hindu religious and cultural practices, follows closely in the tradition of Herskovits.

This collaboration – involving an Afro-Martinican social scientist (Sulty) and an Indo-Guadeloupean priest or *pouçari* (Nagapin) – is one of the few

monographs to examine religious expression by a minority group in *both* islands. The authors' objective is two-fold: to restore the Indian or Hindu part of their French Antillean cultural patrimony, in all its ethical and aesthetic dimensions; and to contribute to an understanding of Indian traditions, too long obscured by the dominant Creole and French cultures. Thus the work is designed both to preserve and inform.

The book is organized into several distinct sections. It begins with an introduction to Hinduism (Brahmanism and popular Hinduism) in India and its transplantation in the nineteenth century to the French Antilles with the arrival of Indian indentured laborers to the region. There follows a description of the French Antillean Hindu pantheon with the inclusion of Hindu myths, legends, and epics. The work then proceeds to a detailed description of religious rituals, ceremonies, and cults, comparing data from Martinique, Guadeloupe, and occasionally India. Next there is an examination of philosophical and theological issues – e.g., trance, sacrifice, the sacred and profane, impurity and purification. The work shifts to a discussion of French Antillean Hindu arts (architecture, sculpture, music, dance, musical instruments, songs, culinary art, and ethnopharmacology). It ends with a brief discussion of the colonial contact between two quite different religious systems, Catholicism and Hinduism. From this reviewer's perspective, any one of these major divisions could be the basis for a book. While the variety of themes adds to our knowledge of French Antillean Hinduism, the work tends to be a bit diffuse.

The authors treat rather extensively the variation in cult celebrations in Martinique and Guadeloupe which stem from the ethnic, religious, and social diversity of the original indentured laborers brought to the region. For example, Kalimai is venerated in Guadeloupe where recruits came from both northern and southern India, but the cult is absent in Martinique where the ethnic make-up was essentially Tamil. Even with the divergence in belief and practice from one location to another, the authors trace the gradual syncretism of the different Hindu religious traits into a reconstituted form in which popular, not Brahmanic, Hinduism is favored and Indo-Aryan culture has been absorbed by Dravidian traditions.

Some scholars might object to the word "Hindu" used throughout the text, preferring the more inclusive cultural category "Indian" when referring to the religion since Hinduism is not represented in the French Antilles in a pure state. Indeed the degree of culture loss and transformation among overseas Indians has been more extensive in the French region than the former British territories for a variety of reasons – among them, the small ratio of Indians to the total population, centralizing tendencies of the French state and its colonial policy, absence of ties with India, and a domi-

nant ideology grounded in cultural assimilation to the subordination of all other cultures. Yet in the larger context of the current movement to recognize and promote diverse cultural identities in France, Sully and Nagapin have consciously chosen to "ethnicize" their study and focus on the long neglected Hindu contributions to French Antillean life, thus elevating the dialogue.

The authors do not include any demographic or sociological data about the Indian practitioners of either island. Readers are left to question about the proportion of Indians who continue to observe Hindu religious life and way of being; whether this behavior is in opposition to, or alongside, Catholicism, the dominant religion of the French islands; and how extensive the current Indian revivalist movement is among Indo-Antilleans, and in turn, which social strata are involved. One may even wonder whether the rich, complex Hindu knowledge documented here is accessible to the participants or only to those who are initiated, such as the priests and interpreters who have been interviewed for this study.

What distinguishes the book from all previous work on overseas Indians in both the French and English Caribbean is the inclusion of over 200 photographs, engravings, drawings, and maps which provide iconographic documentation for the text. Photographs fall into three main categories: images of cult practices in nineteenth-century India, black-and-white prints from the indenture period, and color photographs of present-day Indian ceremonies in the French Antilles. Although Sully and Nagapin discount evidence of syncretism of Hindu cults with Creole (African) or Catholic religico-cultural practices, many of the photographs reveal another dimension to the reality: the presence of musicians, participants, and observers who are not exclusively, or "purely," Indian. These individuals of mixed descent are referred to variously in the text as *créoles*, *créoles hindous*, or *hindouisants créoles*, with no further qualification. As other scholars have suggested common elements between Hindu rituals and African-derived religions such as *vodou* or Orisha, the work would have benefited by an exploration of the possibilities of syncretism or "parallel traditions" (Mahabir & Maharaj 1989), especially in light of strong acculturation pressures faced by the Indian minority.

A book like this is important for the Indian communities of Guadeloupe and Martinique as they seek to discover and define their *indianité* as a legitimate part of French Antillean culture and identity. Sully and Nagapin's study should be viewed as an introduction to French Antillean Hinduism, encompassing a well-researched inventory of its current rituals, ceremonies, beliefs, and traditions which are in the process of being revitalized. As more lay and scholarly interest is shown in continuity and change, tradition and modernism in Hindu culture, this work will provide a useful resource and springboard for more in-depth research and analysis.

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*Hindu Trinidad: Religion, Ethnicity and Socio-Economic Change*. STEVEN VERTOVEC. London: Macmillan, 1992. xii + 272 pp. (Paper £12.95)

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This study employs recent anthropological theory to reframe the question of cultural and religious change among Indo-Trinidadians. It promises to accomplish three things: to chart out key cultural and religious transformations; to integrate these transformations with changes in the social, political, and economic surroundings; and to explore the ways in which Indian ethnicity is inextricably linked to and informed by these composite changes. While the study realizes its first goal with an admirable degree of detail and clarity, it falls short in the other two.

Utilizing a comparative perspective, Chapter 1 analyzes how the various historical circumstances surrounding the system of indenture in India and subsequent settlement patterns of Indians in the colonies channeled cultural change – especially in the spheres of kinship and household, caste, and Hinduism.

After a brief historical overview of the Indo-Trinidadian experience, Chapter 2 outlines the process of cultural and religious homogenization. Here, Vertovec argues, diverse local religious practices became supplanted by a standardized, pan-Sanskrit Hinduism in Trinidad which resulted in the routinization of certain rites and rituals at the familial level, and the institutionalization of Hinduism at the communal level. Although Vertovec's overall description of the development of Hinduism is sound, it lacks analytical rigor. For example, he rightly claims that Hindu sentiment and activity declined in the 1960s but withholds any substantive explanation other than to suggest that the institutional breakdown of the main religious body, the Maha Sabha, may have been a contributing factor. Given his claim that Hinduism flourished in Trinidad prior to its institutionalization, other factors shaping the economic, political, and ethnic climates may also have led to this decline. For example, the 1960s were also an era of nation-building which emphasized Afro-Caribbean sentiments at the cost of alienating Trinidad's Indian population, which was expected to suppress its "Indian-ness" for the good of the nation. It is indeed surprising that Vertovec fails to see the significance of this process for the attenuation of Hinduism during this period.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 examine the repercussions of the oil boom of 1973-82 on socio-religious phenomena. Ironically, as Vertovec notes, rapid modernization and an astounding increase in per capita income led to a rejuvenation of Indian cultural and religious activity and ethnic sentiment. Chapter 4 traces some key Hindu rituals that were bolstered by this new wealth at both the familial and institutional level. Yet no satisfactory explanation is offered as to why all this necessarily led to an ethnic renaissance. Two paragraphs on page 163 hint at possible causes, such as the unequal treatment of Indians and the pressure to adopt Afro-Caribbean cultural patterns, but concrete connections are left for the reader to forge.

Chapter 5 provides an interesting discussion of contemporary Hindu practices at the village level and captures nicely the habitual dimensions of cultural practice which inform and reproduce "taken-for-granted" world views in ever-so-subtle ways.

Two premises of this book – its conceptualizations of cultural homogeneity and cultural reproduction – make it a significant departure from the existing literature on Indo-Trinidadian cultural and religious change. Unfortunately, while the book delivers on its first promise it falls short on the second.

Unlike earlier works that emphasized cultural commonalities among Indo-Trinidadians, Vertovec begins with the refreshing premise that the original Indian migrants constituted a vastly heterogeneous group. Empha-

sis on cultural commonalities inadvertently contributed to the somewhat misleading notion that the persistence of given cultural traits, such as the Bhojpuri dialect, provided the cultural foundation for the subsequent development of communal solidarity. Vertovec's point is that cultural practices and beliefs varied considerably not only among the provinces but also within the districts and villages whence these migrants came. The work, premised on the "distinctive cultural complexes and socio-economic networks" that characterized the "day-to-day worlds of villagers prior to emigration," attempts to analyze how "the diverse population of Indians in Trinidad eventually came to form a mutually agreed-upon style of life, system of social relationships, and set of cultural institutions" (pp. 91-92). Thus the process of cultural and religious homogenization is posed as a problem to be explained rather than a self-evident feature of Indo-Trinidadian life.

Second, as Vertovec notes, much of the previous literature on Indo-Trinidadians utilized a simplistic model of culture perceived as "tangible stuff that one either continued to or no longer continued to 'have.' Thus pre-migration traditions ... are often treated as kinds of 'baggage' which the original migrants 'brought with them,' either to be discarded piecemeal or altogether, or 'kept' until post-indenture conditions allowed their re-emergence" (p. x). This simplistic conceptualization has led not only to a depiction of Indo-Trinidadians as a people burdened with an unusually heavy cultural baggage, but also to poor analyses of the historical and contemporary situation of Indo-Trinidadians where culture constitutes the ultimate explanation for their behavioral practices. In contrast, Vertovec, utilizing Bourdieu's "practice" approach, sees cultural phenomena "as being continuously reproduced in discourse with social/economical/political surroundings" which are always in flux (p. x). The process of cultural reproduction then, he argues, inevitably entails modification. This approach perceives culture not as "tangible stuff" but "as internalized types of relationship, behavioural and emotional dispositions, sets of symbols, techniques, and conceptual orders – all capable of being articulated in a number of ways – which individuals and groups of people reproduce by '*doing*' them" (p. x). Regrettably, apart from this brief theoretical exposition in the introduction, the book fails to demonstrate this concept of cultural reproduction in practice, that is with respect to the ethnography, except perhaps in the last chapter.

While the book rejuvenates the theme of Indian cultural persistence or attenuation by problematizing the two crucial axes of cultural homogeneity and cultural reproduction, its failure to explore the central role of ethnicity and all its implications for cultural reproduction ultimately frustrates this study. The book also relies too heavily on description and under-substantiated assertions, and suffers from numerous typographical errors.

*Caribbean Women Writers: Essays from the First International Conference.*  
SELWYN R. CUDJOE (ed.). Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press,  
1990. xv + 382 pp. (Cloth US\$ 37.50, Paper US\$ 14.95)

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The first international conference of Caribbean women writers and critics was held at Wellesley College in April 1988; the results of this meeting form the content of this volume. Forty texts, a collection of literary essays, historical accounts, interviews, autobiographical reminiscences, poems, and excerpts from prose fiction restore (in the words of Mathurin Mair) the suppressed voices of "those missing women" by "probing deeply into the conventional sources of Caribbean history" (p. 53) and by reproducing what the writers themselves say about their own works and their own lives.

This all-encompassing work on the Caribbean is, more precisely, on the English-speaking Caribbean; only one text is devoted to each of the Spanish-, French-, and Dutch-speaking islands. It begins with a 43-page introduction by Selwyn Cudjoe, who presents a synthesis of the main tendencies represented in the book, integrating them into a historical overview of the evolution of writings by women, and pausing to give more detailed accounts of some of the most influential writers in each of the geographical spaces. This introduction lays the groundwork for what follows and we are soon immersed in the first section of the book – five articles which problematize numerous questions underlying women's literary production. In this first section, Rhoda Reddock maps the history of feminism in Jamaica, Trinidad, and Tobago and points out that "feminism has not been a 1960s import into the Caribbean" but rather the "continuation of a rich struggle ... firmly based within the sociopolitical and historical context of the region" (p. 63). Laura Niesen De Abruna then continues to trace the literary manifestations of this struggle, characterized, for example, by images that show the "value of female bonding," or by certain types of narratives. De Abruna and Arthur Paris explain the particular alienation of female writers because of the attention focused on male writers and the hitherto predominantly masculine literary production. The debate extends to the relation between different ethnic identities in the Caribbean and the post-colonial questioning of the sites of so-called official cultures located traditionally in European and North American centers.

In the following section ("The Text: In Their Own Words"), we see that



the more radical views of the American critic Bell Hook underline the concerns of many of the Caribbean women. Hook (who is not a contributor to the volume) carries the gender confrontation to its farthest limits. She laments the visible split that has emerged between black men and women which would suggest that the concerns of the two groups are not the same ... and that black solidarity is impossible in such an atmosphere (Hook 1990:17). The question is very real. For example, writer Grace Nichols refuses to be identified as a "feminist writer," asking, "Now am I black first or am I woman first ... which is more important to me, the woman's struggle or the fight against neocolonialism and political repression? I can't compartmentalize myself, I hate all forms of oppression" (p. 289). It is interesting to note that many of the writers who talk about themselves in this second part of the volume refuse the "feminist" label, although a discourse which questions feminine subjectivity is at the very roots of their writing. Merle Hodge sees her writing as a form of "guerrilla activity" against the invasion of foreign fiction, while Jamaica Kincaid asserts that she is more interested in defining a non-American and therefore non-mimetic literary poetics than in reflecting on the role of women in fiction.

What soon becomes very clear in all these discussions is that whether the positions are explicit or not, a feminist perspective functions inevitably as one of the anti-colonial paradigms; it locates the speaking subject, the narrator, the writer, or the *personnage* in a power struggle with the "other" – a black male, a white male or female, a white-structured system of values, etc. – where the black female voices subvert the stereotypical role of the powerless victim and refuse to be defined by masculine voices.

Several criticisms could be made of these essays. First, the chapters on the non-English speaking cultures give an incomplete view of those literatures and therefore are of very limited interest to specialists in these fields. For example, the absence of any mention of the Guadeloupean writer and sociolinguist Dany Bébel-Gisler in the chapter on francophone/creolophone women writers is surprising to say the least, given the fact that Bébel-Gisler is the most prolific and most militant feminist thinker and writer in the French Caribbean.

Another weakness concerns recent theoretical models for post-colonial and transcultural paradigms. Concepts such as those of Edouard Glissant who talks of a poetics of "relation" and a literature of the "*hétérogène*," Patrick Chamoiseau who prefers to speak of "*diversalité*," or Homi Bhabha who uses the term "transnational dissemination" imply, argues Amaryll Chanady, the deconstruction of the traditional dichotomies of the "same" and the "other," "*l'identique à soi-même*" and "*la différence*" (1993). These concepts, which indicate the possibility of a new cultural interrelation, the

fluid interchange between all forms of diversity, would tend to exclude the models that many of the Caribbean women writers construct for themselves, models perceived as relations in terms of power struggles based on dyadic oppositions between metropolitan, colonial culture and Caribbean culture, or between male and female literature. In the context then, of the most recent theoretical discourses, the quest for identity (the search for "our essential values," as Selwyn Cudjoe puts it, quoting Astrid Roemer [p. 47]) becomes highly problematic because these notions would tend to exclude the complex set of cultural interrelations which form the basis of all Caribbean societies.

This volume is, nevertheless, an indispensable reference work for anyone doing research in this area. It brings together the most important women writing in the English Caribbean; it contains much new and illuminating historical material; and the interviews and personal essays provide exceptional insight into the deep-seated tensions which have motivated the creative process.

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*Nieuwe Surinaamse verhalen*. MICHIEL VAN KEMPEN (ed.). Paramaribo: De Volksboekwinkel, 1986. 202 pp. (Paper NLG 26.50)

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*Verhalen van Surinaamse schrijvers*. MICHIEL VAN KEMPEN (compiler). Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 1989. 248 pp. (Paper NLG 29.90)

*Hoor die tori! Surinaamse vertellingen*. MICHIEL VAN KEMPEN (compiler). Amsterdam: In de Knipscheer, 1990. 267 pp. (Paper NLG 32.50)

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After his first collection of short stories by Suriname writers in 1986, the success of Michiel van Kempen's editing activities experienced a remarkable crescendo. The initial, modest anthology was published by a small firm in Suriname, and received little attention outside that country. The second volume, which also includes poetry, was issued in 1988 by a small periodical in the Netherlands as a special on Suriname; however, it still needed financial support from a provincial authority. The third and fourth anthologies (1989 and 1990) found places on the list of a well-known Dutch publisher. Van Kempen's next work in the field was the Suriname issue of *De Gids* (1990), the oldest and one of the most respected cultural magazines of the Netherlands. Since this review was written, he edited two more collections of Suriname literature.

Van Kempen, a philologist, lived and worked in Suriname from 1983 through 1987. During this time, he published a comprehensive study, complete with a detailed bibliography, of Suriname literature from the period 1970-85. Van Kempen returned to the Netherlands in 1987 with fascinating memories and experiences. To maintain contacts with Suriname writers and review literature for Suriname newspapers, he continues to make visits to Suriname. In the Netherlands, he had a literature column in the *Weekkrant Suriname*. His most outstanding achievements so far are the anthologies

mentioned above. No doubt, Michiel van Kempen is presently the greatest supporter and promoter of Suriname literature.

Because the five volumes discussed in this review include 83 short stories and fragments of prose, as well as 50 poems, this review will not be detailed. The stories in *Hoor die tori!* will be discussed only briefly as they contribute more to our knowledge of mythology, religion, and tradition than to literature.

*Nieuwe Surinaamse verhalen* consists entirely of original short stories. The most surprising one is "Het huis van Herman" written by Mani Sapotille. It describes the upside-down world of Herman who eventually commits suicide, "as it should be." Another story dealing with the subject of suicide, "Gas," is a *début* for the author Paul Bandel. This volume also contains a charming, poetic story entitled "De bloemen zijn gek," by Orlando Emanuels who seems to be more of a poet than a writer of prose. "Gas" and "De bloemen zijn gek" appear not only in this collection but also in *Verhalen van Surinaamse schrijvers*.

*Literatuur in Suriname* is a lovely collection of four original stories, all of them have a point. The background of Rappa's "Rhada" might be viewed as "mystification"; however, the tale develops so naturally that, as a piece of art, it is quite convincing. Mani Sapotille presents a perfect anecdote, told by a school teacher in "De leegte," the second story in the collection. The next tale, "De goede verwachting," by Amber is in essence cynical. The final piece is "Mohammeds bedevaart," a *début* for Sanicari. In my opinion, this work deserves top ranking among all of the stories under discussion. The author's description of a girl who has the capacity to tap into the thoughts and feelings of others, in particular her lovers, might be viewed by many as "mystification"; nevertheless, it is quite astonishing and incredibly convincing.

The stories from *Literatuur in Suriname* are reprinted in *Verhalen van Surinaamse schrijvers*, except for the tale by Sapotille, who instead presents "De man in de zandloper," his best story yet. Here, Sapotille ingeniously telescopes the colonial past with its cruel slavery into the present with its renewed violence, now military in nature. The collection also includes a new story by Thea Doelwijt, "Ere wie ere toekomt," as well as older pieces by Hugo Pos, Bea Vianen, and Barbara Stephan. In my opinion, the combination of old and new makes this volume the best of the five discussed. However, there is one shortcoming – the fragment of unpublished film script written in 1937 by the late Anton de Kom. The only reason that I can see for selecting this piece is that the author himself is interesting. In 1933, Anton de Kom tried to organize the working class of Suriname to start a movement aimed at improving their living conditions. Although his methods were not illegal, the government found them to be too provocative and expelled De

Kom from the colony after a demonstration by his supporters which ended in bloodshed. His activism, along with the book *Wij slaven van Suriname* (1934) in which he describes his experiences, won him acclaim as a national hero. In his book, De Kom appears to be an able narrator, but he demonstrates a shocking lack of knowledge about Suriname outside of the capital. The fragment included in *Verhalen van Surinaamse vertellingen*, which is interesting simply because it tells about De Kom and thus deserves to be published, has the same failures as his book. He still shows a lack of familiarity with Suriname's main rivers, and again decorates his story with nonsense about nature – in this instance, the Netherlands.

The fourth volume, *Hoor die tori! Surinaamse vertellingen* seems, at first glance, to be the most promising. However, the majority of the pieces, both the new and the old ones, are not particularly striking. Even the stories by some of the well-known authors such as Albert Helman, Astrid Roemer, Benny Ooft, and Michaël Slory are disappointing. Mani Sapotille, using the pen-name Winston Leeftang, carries his ingenuity too far; in other words, I do not follow his logic. Despite these shortcomings, there are a few contributions that deserve mentioning. Thea Doelwijt offers a quite intriguing piece, "Monsters," in which she presents a harrowing view of the attitudes of "civilized people" towards "savages." Also in this volume, Hugo Pos creates a situation and atmosphere in "Een en een" equal to that of Somerset Maugham's familiar stories about his travels to the tropics. Another remarkable piece, "Jairam vertelt," by a Hindostani describes the trials and tribulations of this immigrant who through hard work and perseverance attains a position as an independent farmer. Finally, the stories by Rappa and Wilfred del Prado are also well worth reading.

Among the six stories, the special issue on Suriname of *De Gids*, the only one that impressed me was that by Sapotille/Leeftang. This story, "Jij at de vensterbank," describes the relationship of a man [quite possibly a white representative of western civilization – the author never reveals this outright] with a Hindostani girl. Also included in "Suriname" is a large fragment from Paul Marlee's *Proefkonijn* (1985), the only Suriname novel ever to be translated into English. "Over de geheimen van de liefde," also deserves attention for the curious style and vocabulary developed by Edgar Cairo, a propagator of the unique Dutch variety – "Surinamese Dutch."

Finally, a few comments on the poems found in *Literatuur in Suriname* and the Suriname issue of *De Gids*. In my opinion, the poems presented by Michaël Slory, Shrinivāsi, and Astrid Roemer are all very good. In addition, several of the other poems deserve serious attention. However, there are quite a few which can simply not be categorized as poetry because they consist merely of ordinary language divided into arbitrarily chosen small

pieces arranged in vertical rows. The poetry found in these volumes is similar to the prose in one essential aspect: the majority of the best pieces come from authors that have already built reputations – Vianen, Doelwijt, Pos, Rappa. For me, the great discovery is Sapotille/Leeflang.

The introductions to these five volumes, as well as the more specialized essays on the position of several ethnic groups in the Suriname issue of *De Gids*, are beyond the scope of this review. However, I would like to call attention to one phenomenon that has not yet, to my knowledge, been observed: the attention to mysticism found in the new contributions. The difference between reality and the supernatural is vague; the stories balance, sometimes quite ingeniously, on the edge.

After completing this review, I made the astonishing discovery that Sapotille/Leeflang is Van Kempen. Lou Lichtveld started this questionable Surinamese habit of using, quite openly, a "writers name" as a pseudonym – Albert Helman in his case. However, it is interesting to note that those who did not use Lichtveld's example are among the most outstanding authors of the country: Ferrier, Vianen, Doelwijt, Roemer, Cairo, and Pos. I hope that Van Kempen will develop his talent to a degree that will allow him to drop Sapotille and Leeflang, and thus join the latter group.

*Development and Structures of Creole Languages: Essays in Honor of Derek Bickerton.* FRANCIS BYRNE & THOM HUEBNER (eds.). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1991. x + 222 pp. (Cloth US\$ 47.00)

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Byrne and Huebner have put together a varied collection of essays in honor of Derek Bickerton on his sixty-fifth birthday that will be of interest to a wide range of linguists, including creolists, variationists, lexical semanticists, syntacticians, and linguistic anthropologists. The collection contains an introduction by Francis Byrne, which provides, in addition to a preview of the book's contents, a synopsis of Bickerton's life, research interests, and major contributions to linguistics. The introduction appropriately concludes with a lengthy, partial bibliography of Bickerton's publications, including both his fictional and linguistic work.

The volume is organized into five sections, each containing two or three

articles: Identifying Creoles: "St. Helena English" by Ian Hancock and "American Indian English: A Phylogenetic Dilemma" by Guillermo Bartelt. Language Variation: "Style, Status, Change: Three Sociolinguistic Axioms" by Dennis Preston, "Using the Future to Explain the Past" by Gillian Sankoff, and "Decreolization or Dialect Contact in Haiti?" by Albert Valdman. Creole Processes: "From Botany to Creolistics: The Contribution of the Lexicon on the Flora to the Debate on Indian Ocean Creole Genesis" by Robert Chaudenson, "Ndjuka Organization of Experience: African or Universal?" by George Huttar, and "A Reexamination of Bickerton's Phylogenesis Hypothesis" by Mary C. Black & Glenn G. Gilbert. Creole Syntax and Semantics: "Pidgins, Creoles, Typology, and Markedness" by Salikoko S. Mufwene, "The Binding Theory and Creolization: Evidence from 18th Century Negerhollands Reflexives" by Pieter Muysken & Hein van der Voort, and "On the Copula in Mauritian Creole, Past and Present" by Philip Baker & Anand Syea. Serial Verbs: "Serialization in Creole Oral Discourse" by Geneviève Escure, "The Definition of Serial Verbs" by Pieter Seuren, and "Approaches to 'Missing' Internal (and External) Arguments in Serial Structure: Some Presumed Difficulties" by Francis Byrne.

The articles in each section are in some way concerned with issues that Bickerton has examined over the years and which have become central concerns of researchers interested in language contact phenomena. For example, the two articles in the first section discuss problems associated with classifying contact varieties of English that exhibit creole-like features, but whose histories do not evidence the creolization process as described by Bickerton. Especially noteworthy in Bartelt's article are his discussions of prior research on American Indian English and his informed discussion of AIE in the Southwest – in particular, among the Apache. Hancock's article provides a valuable description of the immigrant and political history of St. Helena, as well as word lists and some notes on grammar (e.g., auxiliaries, negation, questions, and pronouns).

Sankoff's article investigates a subject that has been a principal focus in Bickerton's work – namely, the semantics of tense and aspect. She analyzes the form *bai* with respect to its meaning and function in the tense-aspect system of Tok Pisin and finds, contrary to assumptions of prior work, that it is used in past contexts. She proposes a sequence of semantic shifts in the use of *bai*, from future tense marker to irrealis mood to iterative-habitual to punctual aspect. Preston's article, in the same section, is concerned with the relationship among the various factors that influence variation, and his conclusions support Bickerton's contention that variation can be accounted for primarily by a language's grammar, rather than by social factors. A good deal of Preston's article involves discussing the relevance of several VAR-

BRULE analyses for the idea that the usual source of variation observed in the social dimension is the variation space made available by the surrounding linguistic contexts. Preston also has a useful discussion of how violations of this principle may be symptomatic of changes in progress in a grammar.

In some papers, authors uphold views that contrast with Bickerton's. For example, Mufwene challenges Bickerton's claim that the typological options chosen by pidgins and creoles represent the unmarked options of UG. With numerous illustrations from Kituba, Haitian Creole, and Gullah, among other languages, Mufwene argues that prototypical PC features, such as isolating morphosyntax, are unmarked with respect not to UG but to specific contact situations. These unmarked PC features are determined by a variety of factors in the contact situation, according to Mufwene, including salience and semantic transparency. Baker & Syea's paper also questions one of Bickerton's propositions – that zero equative copula constructions signal heavy superstrate influence in a creole. Their assiduous investigation of the evolution of the copula in Mauritian Creole suggests that zero copula has been a feature of MC from at least the mid-eighteenth century. The challenge that French-based creoles represent for Bickerton's claim is discussed in their conclusion.

A notable trait of this collection is the interplay that exists among several of the papers. The juxtaposition of ideas in the section on serial verbs, for example, is particularly intriguing. While Escure and Seuren agree that verb serialization has not received a proper definition, they differ with regard to the best approach for developing a theory of serial verbs. Escure argues that a theory of serial verbs should account for their function and meaning rather than merely their form. In following this approach, she widens the definition of serialization in such a way that it includes the reflexes of serialization found in at least some acrolects. Seuren, on the other hand, holds the view that the definition of serial verbs should be narrowed, so as to exclude serial-like structures found in superstrate languages, such as English. Both papers present valid reasons for pursuing their respective agendas, and readers are led to scrutinize the role of verb serialization in identifying sources of creole structures. The third paper on serialization, by Byrne, is concerned with the syntactic status of "missing" arguments in serial structures, and prior proposals for such structures are evaluated. The data that Byrne presents on serials involving Dative arguments and his speculations about how serial structures evolve are relevant and potentially important not only for establishing the syntactic structure of serial verb constructions but also for evaluating the proposals made by Escure and Seuren.

Another combination of papers that complement each other in a fruitful way are Black & Gilbert's paper on Bickerton's phylogenesis hypothesis



and Huttar's paper on the relationship between semantic structures in Ndjuka and other languages. Black & Gilbert tackle the question of why reactions to Bickerton's theory of language origins have been so minimal. They maintain that Bickerton's phylogenesis theory deserves greater consideration than it has received and suggest that semantically-based cross-linguistic creole studies should be carried out in order to learn "whether individual creoles exhibit more similarities to each other or to their source languages, and thereby to discover the extent and nature of linguistic universals." Huttar's study of the relationship among word forms, their meanings, and extensions of their meanings in forty-five languages attempts to find out whether the semantic structures of Ndjuka owe more to substrate influences or creole universals. While his provisional conclusion is that semantic structures of Ndjuka owe more to substrate influences than to creole universals, it is his circumspect discussion of how to improve on the methodology of this sort of complex study that will be especially useful for addressing the kind of future research suggested by Black & Gilbert.

This Festschrift, which juxtaposes a generous assortment of provocative topics and thought-challenging issues, is an apt testimonial to Derek Bickerton's distinguished and influential career.

*The Speech of the negros congos of Panama.* JOHN M. LIPSKI. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1989. vii + 159 pp. (Cloth US\$ 53.00, NLG 100.00)

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In a brief introduction, Lipski discusses some of the cultural manifestations of the *congo* games and the special dialect mode used in the *congo* ceremonies which take place during carnival season. The book, he writes, has two goals: "(1) to offer a comprehensive description of the *congo* dialect of the Costa Arriba area of Colón province," and "(2) to evaluate the diachronic evolution of this speech mode, in particular its possible origin as an Afro-Hispanic creole, and to assess the importance of this dialect for general theories of creolization of languages and of African influence on Latin American Spanish."

The *congo* games are described as being folkloric reconstructions of what

was no doubt a celebration of freedom from slavery. As time passed, however, the dialect used by the ex-slaves to express their revelry changed due to an element of improvisation which is now part and parcel of the ceremonies. There is also considerable regional variation in the *congo* language due to the relative isolation of the villages where it is used.

Lipski explains that *congo* differs most significantly from regional Panamanian Spanish in its morphology. In the verbal morphology, for example, we find (1) regularization of irregular forms (*cabo* for *quepo* "I fit"), (2) substitution of paradigmatic variants in person (*tú sabo* [*sabes*] "you know"), number (*un árbol que tienen* [*tiene*] "a tree which has"), tense (*yo fuiste* [*soy*] "I were = I am"), and mood (*aquí do tenga* [*lo tienes*] "Here you have it"), and the creation of innovative forms totally unrelated to normal Spanish patterns (*churprie* [*chupo*] "I suck"). *Congo* nominal morphology displays partial or total neutralization of gender, which is realized through processes such as the exchange of the -o and -a endings and/or the interchange of the definite articles or the demonstratives. There are also modifications in adjectival, pronominal, adverbial, and prepositional morphology.

There are certain recurring syntactic modifications found within the improvisation. Some of these are: (1) a higher frequency usage of pronouns, especially *tú* "you" [informal], *yo* "I," and *usted* "you" [formal], (2) the elimination of certain prepositions, especially *de* and *a*, (3) a free alternation between indicative and subjunctive forms, and a "syntax of negation," in which words are assigned opposite meanings (e.g., *¿Qué é do que tú no quede?* = *¿Qué es lo que quieres?* "What do you want?"). According to Lipski, "the most immediately noteworthy aspect of *congo* dialect is the systematic semantic inversion, designed to confuse and amaze spectators ..." This is achieved through (1) the substitution of semantically opposite elements (e.g., *vivi* = *muerto* "alive = dead"), (2) inversion through negative words (e.g., *poco amigo* = *muy amigo* "not a good friend = a good friend"), (3) inversion through idiomatic expressions (e.g., *está con los ojos abiertos* = *murió* "his eyes are open = he died"). and (4) partial semantic displacement (e.g., *durmiendo* = *soñando* "sleeping = dreaming"). One important fact regarding semantic inversion and pointing to the playful nature of the *congo* dialect is that it is not rule-governed and therefore may not be analyzed in the traditional linguistic sense.

Before the chapter on phonological characteristics, there is a brief discussion concerning similarities with vestigial Spanish speakers. Here, Lipski finds that since overall strategies are the same between vestigial Spanish and the *congo* dialect, there is support for "the tentative conclusion that contemporary *congo* speech represents the continuation of an earlier, legitimately Afro-Hispanic speech mode..."

The following chapters deal with phonological characteristics of the *congo* dialect, the *congo* dialect and the phonology of Panamanian Spanish, and the possible African basis for the *congo* speech. What Lipski calls "fixed phenomena" in *congo* consist of the neutralization of /r/, /r̄/, /l/, and /d/, and of the occlusive articulation of /b/, /d/, and /g/. Otherwise, the *congo* dialect mirrors the same phonotactic structures found in regional Panamanian Spanish of the Costa Arriba, which include vocalic substitutions (e.g., *sumuna sunta* = *semana santa* "Holy Week"), consonantal epenthesis (e.g., *crambio* = *cambio* "change"), and open syllabicity, especially through elimination of syllable-final consonants.

In the chapter comparing *congo* and Panamanian Spanish, Lipski attempts to assess the former vis-à-vis its importance for Afro-Hispanic linguistics. While doing this, he provides useful information on word-final /n/ and on the behavior of /l/, /r/, and /s/ in several Spanish dialects. In his conclusions based on this comparison, he states that "inasmuch as it [*congo*] represents a carryover of earlier Africanized Spanish, [it] has absorbed most of the changes that have affected regional Spanish, while maintaining (or perhaps restoring) those features most closely aligned with creolized Spanish."

The final chapter, "The Possible African Basis for *congo* Speech," contains summary information on grammatical modifications among certain creole languages (with examples from Colombian *palenquero*, Papiamentu, the Samaná Peninsula of the Dominican Republic, *Chota* of Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Cuban *bozal* Spanish, Puerto Rican *bozal* Spanish, Peruvian *bozal* Spanish, Guinea-Bissau creole, Cape Verde creole, and Annobon creole), examples of literary representations of *bozal* Spanish and Portuguese from Golden Age authors, a comparison, in table form, of Afro-Hispanic dialect characteristics, and descriptions of phonetic modifications of Afro-Iberian creoles, all for the purpose of comparative and contrastive analyses with the *congo* dialect. Finally, there are brief statements regarding the phonetic rhythm, intonation, and lexical elements of *congo*. Final conclusions summarize points made earlier with respect to the obfuscation of proto-creole elements in the *congo* dialect having been brought about through a *sui generis* phenomenon of exaggeration and playfulness on the part of the merry-makers.

There are places where the book could have been expanded, although it is an excellent introduction to the study of this Panamanian dialect. Perhaps its main faults are the editorial errors and some thirty references which are missing from the bibliography. The appendix contains transcriptions in normal Spanish orthography of some of the recorded conversations with native informants, which are useful in conjunction with the taped recordings made *in situ*.

*Language, Style and Social Space: Stylistic Choice in Suriname Javanese.*  
CLARE WOLFOWITZ. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1992. viii + 265  
pp. (Paper US\$ 27.50)

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At first sight there is nothing unusual about taking the phenomenon of style variation in Javanese as an object of study. The peculiarity of the Javanese language lies, indeed, in its extraordinary stylistic elaboration and concomitant lexical variation.

Things are different, however, when Suriname Javanese comes into sight, as this variant of Javanese is often held as stylistically unrefined (*kasar*) and almost without any stylistic lexical alternation. One of the merits of *Language, Style and Social Space* is that it convincingly disproves this evidently biased view. The Suriname-Javanese style system appears to be surprisingly complex and rich, qualities which might be attributed to this book as well.

Wolfowitz's study is based on a seven-month period (in 1976 and 1977) of fieldwork among the Javanese immigrant community in Suriname. The author lived in two different households, one in a large village not too far from Paramaribo (presumably Tamanredjo) and the other in Paramaribo. The bulk of her observations are, as she explicitly states, from the Paramaribo setting. As she readily was considered an insider rather than an outsider, she no longer could be present at the formal men's visits and ceremonies. Consequently the focus of her study is on stylistically determined interaction within the household.

Most analyses of the Javanese style system concentrate on the lexical aspects of speech style, whereby sets or paradigms of lexical alternants are ranked from "low" to "high," thus forming a bipolar continuum of less polite and more polite speech (*ngoko-krama*). In various ways Wolfowitz broadens the concept of stylistic choice as comprising not only the stylistically marked morphemes but also nonlexical stylistic variables such as close-polite forms of expression (intonation, ellipsis, interrogative patterns), strategies of pronoun avoidance, as well as respectful intonation patterns and the use of kin terms as vocatives. In view of all these different stylistic devices, the author comes to the conclusion that in Suriname Javanese (and this might also be the case for non-urban Indonesian Javanese), the use of formal style is only one of the ways in which politeness can be expressed, and not the dominant one at that.

Instead of the conventional bipolar continuum in which styles range from

less polite to more polite, Wolfowitz assumes a model in which three styles are discerned: ordinary style (*ngoko*), respect style, and formal style (*krama/madya*). Each speech style has its own definite stylistic character. Ordinary style, which should not be equated with unstylized (familial) speech, is characterized by a punctuate syntax, with a marked degree of ellipsis and sharp contrasts of pitch, tempo, and vowel quality. Respect style does not necessarily make use of formal lexicon: its hallmarks are the use of the appropriate kinship term as vocative along with a characteristic crooning intonation. Formal style is, apart from its formal lexicon, characterized by smoothly connected strings of syntactically complete (and often redundant) phrases.

All three of these basic speech styles are associated with definite social values: ordinary style with "liveliness" (*ramé*), respect style with "respect" (*urmat*), and formal style with "refinement" (*alus*). However, these norms differ and even contrast depending on the category of interaction: in-group versus out-group, men's versus women's speech, front region versus back region. The last category, the spatial context of interaction, is in Wolfowitz's view a determinant factor which not only specifies the content of these opposing social values but also presupposes the use of specific interaction styles. Ordinary speech style is thus associated with the back region of the house, respect style with the inside region, and formal style with the front region. This association should however not be interpreted rigidly. It is a matter of conceptual framework, not physical setting, and has no prescriptive value whatsoever. In this way, Wolfowitz arrives at a highly complex compartmental model of stylistic choices and associated contexts, widely different from the relatively simple bipolar stylistic structure we generally find in other accounts of Javanese.

It is difficult to rightly assess the value of this study, especially since it offers the reader an extraordinarily complicated and rich picture of style in Suriname Javanese. Much though one might have one's doubts about Wolfowitz's observations and analyses, or even plainly disagree, one must admit that *Language, Style and Social Space* forms a major achievement of scholarship, brilliant in certain respects and, to say the least, highly stimulating.

Though the author had her initial Javanese language training not in Suriname but in Indonesia, she evidently tried from the outset to look at the Suriname-Javanese situation with an unbiased perspective. "The Suriname-Javanese style system," she states explicitly, "is presented here as a distinct sociolinguistic case rather than as a variant or subset of Javanese as used in Indonesia" (p. 26). Thanks to this approach she discovers and discloses many phenomena in Suriname Javanese which are absent or different in Indonesian Javanese: the three-way model of ordinary, respect, and formal

style (instead of the conventional bipolar model), the dominant role of domestic space, and the like. Nevertheless one occasionally comes across theoretical observations based on studies of Indonesian Javanese which have no relevance for Javanese as spoken in Suriname. This comes out most clearly in Chapter 5 on speech levels and Chapter 8 on domestic space. Moreover, it is not always clear whether the author is talking about Suriname Javanese or Indonesian Javanese. One also may regret that some observations are not more fully sustained by Suriname-Javanese illustrations.

The arguments Wolfowitz brings forward for so-called respect style as a distinct style are too meager to convince me. I would rather distinguish three basic styles; instead of what she terms ordinary, respect, and formal, I would discern ordinary, formal, and extremely formal. Wolfowitz is clearly aware of the existence of the extremely formal style, which we encounter in formal men's gatherings and ceremonies, but she does not pay special attention to it because of her focus on domestic familial interaction.

Another limitation is that phenomena such as the frequent use of loan-words from Dutch and Sranan and the code-switching between these languages and Suriname Javanese, which is very usual among Javanese in Suriname, pass almost unnoticed. Besides, there are many items which are dealt with in a cursory fashion, but which deserve a much more thorough and extensive treatment. This holds, for example, for Chapter 3, on the expressive features of ordinary speech, and Chapter 6, on individual styles of lexical politeness. The author admits that many of her observations are provisional, at the same time adding that "several factors suggest that further fieldwork might not materially counter these first and second impressions" (p. 24). Whether or not future research will indeed prove that she is right, it will surely benefit by her courageous and in many respects pioneering effort to disentangle the extraordinarily intricate and strikingly fluid reality of Suriname-Javanese speech style.

*Canadian-Caribbean Relations: Aspects of a Relationship.* BRIAN DOUGLAS TENNYSON (ed.). Sydney, Nova Scotia: Centre for International Studies, 1990. vii + 379 pp. (Paper CAN\$ 14.95)

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This book is a collection of five essays edited by the Director of the Centre of International Studies, University College of Cape Breton, who provided the Introduction as well as Chapter 1. It is the tangible result of the first major collaborative research project undertaken by the Centre and is in some ways a sequel to Tennyson's 1988 anthology, *Canada and the Commonwealth Caribbean*.

The editor carefully shows how the nature of that "special" relationship between Canada and the Caribbean has gradually changed. What was once a close commercial tie between relatively equal and interdependent partners has developed into a "normal" relationship between an industrial nation and a developing neighbor. This idea is further pursued by James Guy who presents an insightful description of the Caribbean countries, showing how their fierce nationalism has undermined all attempts at political federation and economic union. He rightly emphasizes that while the Caribbean Basin is seen by the rest of the world as a single geographic unit, the area still views itself as a collection of disparate entities. This situation complicates all external approaches to the region. Canada has remained conscious of its historical link with the Commonwealth Caribbean and even though its trade with the islands has steadily shrunk, its strategic and financial interests are still substantial and it has contributed more to the development of the West Indies than to any of the developing regions. Guy very much fears, however, that this aid is scattered in too haphazard a manner with too much concern for the welfare of Canadian investments and not enough for the basic problems facing the islands themselves.

This unfortunate Canadian approach to Caribbean aid comes as no surprise to the readers of Chapter 2, in which Harold Barratt vigorously criticizes the whole Canadian society for its historical and systemic (albeit sometimes covert) racism. He draws upon a wide range of secondary materials to show how West Indian immigrants have generally fared in Canada and to explain why their difficulties have sprung more from racial than cultural causes. He condemns the traditional immigration policies that have placed considerable restriction on the inflow of Blacks and Browns, though

he seems to have seriously underestimated the number of West Indian migrants now resident in Canada.

Frank Renwick presents an intriguing analysis of Canada's international marketing strategies, structures and image based upon a pilot study of its activities in the Caribbean area. He offers incisive criticism of the Canadian approach and emerges with some concrete suggestions for improving Canada's commercial image and performance. He advocates the articulation of a clear policy statement, the promotion of Canadian private involvement in global markets, and the establishment of trading trusts. In the same way that the recent National Trade Strategy has increased Canada's trading interests in the Far East and the Pacific Rim, Renwick feels that a Global Marketing Strategy will permit Canada to shift from being simply a trading nation to a marketing one as well.

Aaron Schneider's contribution is different from the others in that its focus is limited entirely to "Grass Roots Development" in the eastern Caribbean islands of Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent. The whole essay flows from the premise that underdevelopment is rooted in the class structures which deprive the poor of political and economic power. Consequently, only grass roots programs can save the impoverished islands in the eastern Caribbean from continuing underdevelopment and marginalization. Unfortunately, however, grass roots level projects in these countries have generally been carried out in an atmosphere of governmental ambivalence and political sabotage. Schneider's considered view is that the militarism of the United States is the greatest barrier to social justice and economic development in the Caribbean and Central America. But he identifies a number of growth points that have recently emerged in the four countries under review and expresses the hope that Canada will play its role in the proper spirit by opposing the selfish policies of the United States and giving aid to the Caribbean region in such a manner as to profit the beneficiary in the longer run and not the benefactor in the short.

Although there are very few surprises or ground-breaking conclusions here, the book is a fine collection of research papers, all based on wide reading and careful thought. It is a valuable text for any study of Canadian-Caribbean relations and its extensive bibliography is also very useful.



*The University of the West Indies: A Caribbean Response to the Challenge of Change.* PHILIP SHERLOCK & REX NETTLEFORD. London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1990. viii + 315 pp. (Cloth £20.00, Paper £7.95)

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This book – part memoir, part chronicle of the difficulties, problems, and achievements of the 1970s and 1980s – celebrates forty years in the life of the University of the West Indies (UWI). The memoir, written in the first person, is that of Philip Sherlock, whose involvement began with membership in the Irvine Commission, which planned the establishment of the University College of the West Indies (UCWI), later to sever its links with London University and become the UWI. Sherlock took an active part in the development of two campuses, Mona and St. Augustine, and ended as Vice-Chancellor of the UWI. The third-person record of the developments of the 1970s and 1980s is the work of Rex Nettleford, who is now a Pro-Vice Chancellor at the Mona Campus.

If there can be said to be a theme linking the two parts, it is the significant role that political developments in the British Caribbean have played, first in the establishment of the UCWI, and later in the changes over time in the policy and direction of the UWI. The establishment of the College was part of the decolonization process conceived by the British Government as it prepared to shed its empire. It was to provide a governing elite to take over the business of running the region and educate the professionals to replace the officers of the British Colonial Service. The decision to grant independence to the West Indies Federation prompted a rethinking of the role and function of a university in the region. The change of direction which it took during the brief life of the Federation, under the leadership of Arthur Lewis as Vice-Chancellor, set the course for its development as an independent institution. The collapse of the Federation and the coming of independence to each of the constituent territories have led to increased demands that the University meet the needs of each of them. Three campuses, university centers in the non-campus territories, demands for training of all kinds and for applied research, distance teaching, and a range of diploma courses now define the nature of the University.

Forty years is a good vantage point from which to assess the evolution of any educational institution. It is interesting to observe how strikingly different in tone the contributions of Sherlock and Nettleford are. Much of the hope, excitement, and confidence in the future that characterized the early

years of the University are reflected in Sherlock's account, fleshed out by recollections of the early years by staff and students of both Mona and St. Augustine. The more sober realities of life in the University in a period when political pressures grew and economies declined are reflected in Nettleford's contribution.

The decade of the 1960s was in many ways a traumatic one for the UWI. At its beginning, its special relationship to the Federation of the West Indies opened up possibilities of considerable influence in the various aspects of life in the region. Physically, too, it was growing. The prestigious Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture was handed over to the University by the British Government, and formed the nucleus of a new campus in Trinidad. Negotiations for the UCWI's independence from London University were well underway. But before the Royal Charter could be granted, the Federation had disintegrated, and both Jamaica and Trinidad were negotiating their own independence. Funding problems which began then have continued to plague the institution.

On the social scene there was a good deal of unrest. The rise of Ras Tafariism in Jamaica as a protest movement, the inevitable local repercussions of the Black Power movement in the United States, and the resurgence of a Communist movement, with its base effectively on the Mona campus, resulted in a ferment in which students and the younger staff members were caught up. Sherlock refers to these as positive developments, reflecting an awakening sense of nationalism and a search for a West Indian identity. He does not mention the negative aspects, some of which have cast long shadows that may still be seen today.

In particular, the search for an identity caused many of the staff and students to adopt an inward-looking stance. This resulted, for example, in a demand that West Indians should have very high priority in the staffing of the University. Much effort was spent by staff members in trying to influence the economic and political decisions of the governments of the region. But it was perhaps the determination to give physical shape to the idea of a West Indian identity which caused distress both on and off campus. Influenced by both the Black Power movement and a fantasy view of Africa, the physical image of the West Indian put forward for acceptance ignored the racial makeup of the population of the region. It divided rather than united people. The scars of this still remain.

The openness to the outside world of scholarship which had made the early years of the University so exhilarating all but disappeared by the end of the 1960s. Indeed, the reader is left with the impression that in the 1970s and the 1980s the University has been more concerned about reacting to the demands of the various territories than about adopting a leadership role in

scholarship in the region. It has tried to meet the demands for increased access to its degree and diploma courses without significantly lowering its standards for entry, as has been so constantly requested.

That this sprawling, under-funded institution has managed to survive and function as well as it has is nothing short of a miracle. This miracle owes much to the generosity of a large variety of donors – governments, foundations, UN agencies, and individuals – who have provided it with buildings, equipment and scholarships, and have supported research programs on a scale that has not been matched by the territories which claim the UWI as its own. Perhaps also it owes something to the fact that, as both Nettleford and Sherlock make clear, it has become an accepted integral part of the life of the region.



**Frank Cass**

**SLAVERY & ABOLITION**  
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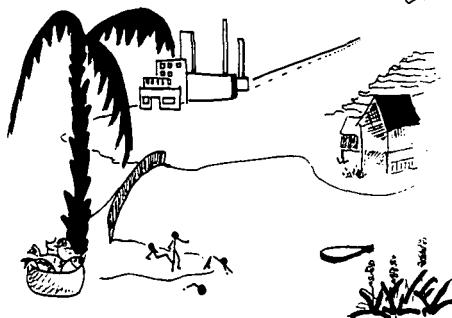
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**A MACRO MODEL FOR MICROLAND**  
*towards a simple empirical macro model for island economies*



A Macro Model for a Small Economy by Marein van Schaaikj

*"With the surgeons knife of the experienced registrar and analyst, the author did an immense, comprehensive, and pioneering work of research that may open doors for studying other very small economies which he dubs 'Microland', a subject approached reluctantly by most economic researchers because of structural obstacles." Book review New West Indian Guide 1&2 1993 p176.*

Dr. M.van Schaaikj who had been working in Suriname in the beginning of the 1970s, in 1989 went back to his old dream to construct a model as a simple tool for analysis. Modern computertechnology helped him to finish the job in 1991. Afterwards he went six times to Suriname to organise workshops for economists and statisticians of Planning Office, Central Bank, Statistical Office, and several Ministries. Now some twenty Surinamese economists are familiar with this quantitative approach and use their experience now to simulate adjustment and restructuring packages.

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